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THE UNDISCOVERED SHORES.

BY EBEN E. REKFOR.

The roving winds blow landward
And bring the breath of blossoms
To us, from that strange country
We dream about so much.
The breath of sweetest blossoms
That bask in one long summer
Where sorrow never cometh,
And no one groweth old.

Sometimes, in dreaming moments,
I fancy that I see them
With sunshine all about them—
The undiscovered shores
I stretch my hands out, yearning
To touch the deathless flowers,
And drink of the clear fountains
So near, yet far away.

So near, that in those moments
The dropping of an eyelid
Brings them before my vision
To glad my weary eyes.
So far, I cannot find them
As sweetest things of earth are
Forever on beyond us,
And only seen in dreams.

Oh shores that haunt my fancies
In sleeping or in waking
Bright with the bloom of summer
For ever, ever more,
You fill me with strange longings
As, in the cold, white winter,
We dream of roses' fragrance
And long for summer days.

Oh, mystic, far-off country!
When weary with its troubles
The heart, by some strange magic,
Can bring your shores in sight,
And listening to your voices,
We rest, and so grow stronger
To bear life's crosses onward
Until the day is done.
Then, when the tide sets seaward,
Our souls will cast their moorings
And sail out to discover
The shores of endless peace.

Freelance, The Cavalier Corsair; OR, THE WAIF OF THE WAVE.

A Nautical Romance of the Early Years of the
Nineteenth Century.

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM,
AUTHOR OF "THE CRETAN ROVER," "MERLE,
THE MUTINEER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

A GRAVE BETWEEN THEM.

LIKE a flood of silver light the moon's rays
streamed down from a cloudless sky, and
bathed land and sea in its halo of dreamy luster.
The winds had died away, and the waves
broke with muffled sound upon the pebbly beach,
while in the background the dark line of forest
echoed to the shrill notes of songsters—the
mock-birds of the South, trilling forth their
melody, as though in joyful admiration of the
calm beauty of the scene.

Along the curving shores of the Gulf, here
and there gleam from the magnolia forests, the
snowy walls of a plantation villa, surrounded
upon either side with spreading acres, tiled by
the dark hands of the slave, whose white cot-
tages are visible in the distance.

In front of these homesteads, the abodes of
wealthy and aristocratic Southernmen, lying at
anchor upon the waters of the Gulf, are visi-
ble yachts of various sizes and rig, but with
sails furled for the night, and no one visible
upon their decks, for the world seems to have
sunk to sleep under the calm influence of the
hour.

Along the shore, and in front of the villas,
winds a broad carriage-drive, and in the dis-
tance appears a horseman, slowly riding along,
the hoofs of his steed falling lightly upon the
dusty road.

At length he halts in front of a massive gate-
way leading into the handsome grounds of a
villa situated back from the road.

Peering through the foliage he beholds a light
in one of the windows, and from his lips break
the words:
"It is the signal! she will be there."

Quietly he enters the gate, closing it without
a sound behind him, and then leaving the drive
that approaches the house, he skirts the fence,
and rides toward a distant clump of trees,
through which patches of white glimmer in the
moonlight.

Nearer and nearer he approaches the clump
of trees, until his spurs to force his horse on,
for the animal seems to dread some danger
hiding in the unlighted covert, or, with the peculiar
instinct of dumb brutes, dreading to approach
the spot where the dead lay at rest.

Presently through the foliage a white fence
was visible, surrounding the marble monuments
erected over those who had sunk to sleep for-
ever, but, apparently with no superstitious
feeling regarding a cemetery, the horseman
urged his horse forward, and springing to the
ground threw the bridle-rein over a post.

As he did so the animal started with a loud
snort, but a word from his master calmed him.
What had caused the sudden fright of the
steed was certainly sufficient to cause human
nature to become momentarily unsteady, for a
form, clad in white, advanced from the shadow
of a marble tomb directly toward the horseman,
who nimbly sprang over the low fence and said
earnestly:

"Lucille, my darling, you are a brave little
girl to meet me here," and he drew the slender
form toward him, and, bending over, imprinted
a kiss upon the upturned face.

"It is not a cheerful place, Launcelot, for a
lovers' tryst, yet I do not fear my dead ances-
tors, for I have never harmed them; but then I
had an idea that our other rendezvous was
known, and hence wrote you to come here."

"And I would have come anywhere to meet
you, Lucille; but has anything arisen of late to
arouse your suspicions?"

"Yes, my father seems to watch me, and
yesterday forbade me to go, after nightfall, to
the arbor on the cliff; but tell me, Launcelot,
when will our meetings be no longer secret?"



"Launcelot Grenville, I curse you!"

"To-morrow, Lucille, I intend to seek your
father and tell him of my love for you; he, as I
before told you, knows who I am, though you
do not, other than what I have told you regard-
ing myself."

"And I have kept my promise and never
made an inquiry regarding Mr. Launcelot
Vernier, the handsome young gentleman who
saved my life, and then stole my heart," said
the maiden, playfully.

"You will find, Lucille, that I have deceived
you in one thing only, but I did so with no dis-
honorable motives, I pledge you."

"Circumstances over which you and I had no
control caused me to beg you to keep our meet-
ings a secret for the present, and a fear of losing
you perhaps made me err in this; but to-mor-
row you shall know all, for, having been North
at school, since you were a very little girl, the
rumors of the neighborhood are unknown to
you."

"I hate gossip, Launcelot, and frequently
have to hush up old Mammy Chloe, who, like
many other old negroes, likes to chat about the
affairs of others; but to-morrow you will see
papa!"

"Yes, and, Lucille, you will still love me,
come what may?"

"Never can I love any one else, Launcelot;
but you are sad; do you dread trouble?" and
Lucille laid her hand gently upon the man's
shoulder, while the moonlight, streaming down
upon them, made a picture worthy the artist's
brush.

The maiden was scarcely more than seven-
teen, with a Madonna-like face of wondrous
beauty, and a tall, willowy form, perfectly
molded.

She was dressed in white, and her embroi-
dered skirt trailed behind her, and her hair
was a mass of wavy curls, and her eyes were
large and full of fire.

He was dressed in a riding-suit, top-boots, and
a gray slouch hat, the broad brim being turned
up, permitting his face to be visible.

And it was a face that few could look upon
and not admire—a face of beauty in every out-
line, blended with nobleness and calm dignity,
a dignity that amounted almost to sternness,
when the features were in repose.

The complexion was dark; the hair and long,
drooping mustache, black, and the eyes restless
and full of fire.

Replying to the maiden's question, the man
said, slowly:

"It seems almost too much happiness, Lu-
cille, when I think that I may win you as my
wife, and bitter obstacles are before us; but we
will hope for the best. Now you must not re-

main longer out in the night air, and to-morrow
our fate will be sealed."

"Devil incarnate! this night shall your fate
be sealed."

The words rung out loud and stern on the
night air, and a dark form bounded from the
shadow of a tree and confronted the lovers, an
upraised arm and knife in hand.

But, quick as was his spring, and taken by
surprise as he was, the man thrust Lucille to one
side, and a pistol gleamed in his hand, aimed di-
rectly at the heart of the assailant.

"Drop that knife, Colonel Darrington, or I
will kill you!"

"For Heaven's sake, do not fire, Launcelot;
it is my father!" and the trembling maiden
sprang between the two men.

Instantly her lover lowered his pistol, while
he said, sadly:

"Forgive me, Lucille; for the moment I for-
got that he was your father, and only looked
upon him as the lifetime foe of my race."

"Ay, Launcelot Grenville, and from this mo-
ment your foe unto death."

"Now, in the presence of my daughter, there
must be no scene; but to-morrow, sir, you shall
hear from me, and the sun shall set upon one
Darrington or Grenville less."

"Oh, Launcelot, are you a Grenville?" cried
Lucille, half shrinking away.

"Yes, Lucille; I told you that there were bitter
barriers between our love for each other—I am
Launcelot Vernier Grenville," said the
young man calmly.

"And you love this man, Lucille?" cried the
father, turning toward his daughter.

"I do, father, with all my heart and soul."

"God bless you, Lucille; and, sir, I love her
daughter—hold, and hear me—I love her with
the honor of a true man, and I would ask you
and her to let the dead past bury its dead, and
the names of Darrington and Grenville become
united."

"Never, sir, never!"

"Stay, Colonel Darrington, and remember
that I am the one that is offering the right
hand of fellowship to the man who killed my
father."

The voice of Launcelot Grenville was deep
and stern, but his manner was earnest, and
there was no tremor in the hand he held forth
to Ferd Darrington.

"By heaven, sir, you will dare me to strike
you even here. Never will I consent that your
blood and mine shall mingle in the veins of a
human being. Only in hatred and the bitter
struggle for life and death shall your blood
mingle with mine."

"So be it, Ferd Darrington. You have
spoken, and the grave now yawns between us—
a grave I was willing to step across with ex-
tended hand."

"And I hurl back that proffered hand with
hatred and contempt!"

"Father, this gentleman saved my life, for he
it was who saved me the day I was kidnapped
by the coast pirates; he it was who attacked
them single-handed, killed two of their num-
ber and rescued me."

"Great God! is this true, Lucille?" and the
strong man staggered back as though dizzy
with overwhelming emotion.

"It is true, father; I told you that a horse-
man passing, and doubtless a traveler, came
to my aid, and I told you the truth, for only
days after, when out riding, did I meet him,
and from that time on we met often, until
I learned to love him with all the devotion
of my heart."

"And, Colonel Darrington, fearing that Lu-
cille would turn from me in horror, knowing
me as Lance Grenville, I gave her part of my
name, that of Launcelot Vernier, and it was
my intention to-morrow to seek you and ask
that the past might be forgotten."

"And again I say—never!"

"Father, I love him, and he loves me; he has
as much, if not more, as I remember the history
of the fearful vendetta between our families, to
forgive that you and I, so listen to our appeal,
father, and let the past be buried forever."

The maiden's voice was plaintive and appeal-
ing, and approaching her father she rested a
hand upon either shoulder, and looked beseech-
ingly into his white, stern face.

But the devil of his nature had complete as-
cendency, and in hoarse, cutting tones, he
said:

"I swear it! Your life, or mine, Lance Gren-
ville!"

"Come, Lucille."

The maiden quickly sprang from him to the
side of her lover and throwing her arms around
his neck, she cried passionately:

"Oh, Launcelot! Launcelot! This is the end
of my happy dream of love! Farewell! forever,
forever!"

Drawing her quickly toward him he pressed a
kiss upon her cold lips, and turning away
sprang into his saddle, and dashed swiftly from
the scene, urging his splendid horse, by a
mighty leap, over the picket fence that sur-
rounded the handsome grounds of the Darring-
ton villa, and flying down the road at a mad
pace, that proved how his noble heart was torn
with grief and despair.

CHAPTER II.
THE DUEL-VENDETTA.

COLONEL FERD DARRINGTON, a stern, haughty
man of forty, and the last male survivor of his
race, sat on the broad piazza of his elegant
house, the morning after the scene at the bury-
ing-ground of his family.

His brow was dark and clouded, his lips firm
set, and his eyes gazing out upon the waters of
the Gulf with that fixed stare, which proves the
thoughts are far away.

Presently the rumble of wheels awoke him
from his reverie, and glancing up he beheld
what, in his time, he had never seen before—the
well-known carriage of the Grenvilles, coming
up to the door of his home.

Instantly he was upon his feet, his face livid,
when from the vehicle sprang a young man,
clad in the attire of an officer in the United
States Navy.

Both men knew each other well by sight, but
never before had a word passed between
them.

Ascending the steps, the young officer said,
coldly, though bowing with politeness:

"Colonel Darrington, I believe?"

"Yes, sir, and I address Lieutenant Arthur
Grenville."

"You do, sir, and I have called to ask, Colo-
nel Darrington, if you intended it as a personal
insult to me when you named, in your affair
with my brother, Mr. Rosal Abercrombie as
your second—a person whom I certainly do not
look upon as a gentleman, and will hold no com-
munication with."

"You can take it as you choose, Lieutenant
Grenville, and, after my meeting with your
brother, I am perfectly willing to hold myself
answerable to you," was the quiet reply of Ferd
Darrington.

"It is my desire, sir, that your meeting with
me be prior to that with my brother, and, as I
decline to act with the second you have named,
we can arrange the time and place for ourselves
personally."

"Ah, I see your drift, sir. You wish, if pos-
sible, by killing me, to prevent a meeting be-
tween myself and Mr. Lance Grenville," said
Colonel Darrington, with a sneer.

"You guess aright, sir. Knowing the imme-
diate cause of quarrel between you and my
brother, I fear that he will not attempt your
life, and that you, in your merciless nature,
should spare him, I have no idea, so I desire to
place the meeting on a more equal footing, by
being the first to face you."

"I will willingly oblige you, Lieutenant, after
I have met your brother, but peremptorily de-
cline doing so before, and as you object to Mr.
Abercrombie, and I wish to place no obstacle
in the way of my hostile meeting with Mr.
Lance Grenville, I will refer you to Mr. Van Loo
as my second."

Arthur Grenville bowed, and, with a look of
disappointment upon his face, entered his car-
riage and drove away.

As the vehicle drew up for the footman to
open the gate, a slender form suddenly sprang
to the window, and Arthur Grenville beheld
one of the most beautiful faces he had ever
looked upon.

It was now white, the eyes were red with
weeping, and the traces of deep sorrow rested
upon every feature, and still the face was ex-
quisitely lovely.

"Ah, sir, beg Launcelot Grenville not to kill my father!"

The words and voice were pleading, and Arthur Grenville seemed moved with pity, while he answered sadly:

"Alas, Miss Darrington, I fear that it will be the other way; but I will do all in my power, for your sake and my brother's, to prevent a fatal termination."

"God bless you," and stepping back Lucille allowed the carriage to go on, while she retraced her way to the mansion, feeling a hedge between herself and the eye of her father, who still paced the piazza.

Having objected to the young man named as Colonel Darrington's first second, on account of his wild and dissolute character, Arthur Grenville could find no fault with Paul Van Loo, a wealthy young planter, and a friend of both himself and brother, and he accordingly sought him out and a meeting was arranged for sunrise the following morning, at a lonely grove upon a point that jutted out into the Gulf.

Before the sun arose on the following day, the Grenville carriage, with its negro coachman and footman in livery, rolled along rapidly to the field, where, ten years before, the father of Lance and Arthur had fallen by the hand of Ferd Darrington, and where, for three generations the Darringtons and Grenvilles had faced each other in the deadly vendetta, and always with fatality to one name or the other.

It was a bitter feud, that had begun half a century before, when a Grenville had been the successful rival of a Darrington for the hand of a beauty and heiress, and had eventually ended in bloodshed, the mantle of hate descending like an heirloom from father to son, until at last two of the name had met and loved each other.

So impatient was Ferd Darrington to meet the man who had dared to love his second already upon the field, they having come there upon horseback, accompanied by a negro servant who bore the deadly weapons to be used in the affray.

Bowing coldly to each other as they met, the two seconds then walked one side, while Colonel Darrington impatiently paced to and fro, an evil glint in his eye, and Lance Grenville leaned against a tree, his arms folded, his face pale, but emotionless, and his eyes gazing afar upon the gulf, as though striving to look into the great beyond and behold the fate in store for him.

How he would have shrunk in horror from that future, had he read in those blue waters the destiny that awaited him.

"Colonel Darrington, Lieutenant Grenville informs me that his brother was the one who rescued your daughter from the coast pirates, some months ago, and that fact?"

"I am, sir, and I am surprised that Mr. Grenville should endeavor to shun this meeting by hedging himself behind a favor rendered to me and mine," was the haughty retort.

"You mistake, sir," Mr. Grenville is represented by his brother, who, in the hope of ending this affair without a fatal termination, told me of the circumstance which none of us in the neighborhood before suspected, and, believing that I know the man to whom you owed Mr. Lance Grenville the life, and perhaps more, of your daughter, this present difficulty might be averted, I spoke as I did."

"I thank you, Van Loo, for your good intentions, but nothing that Mr. Grenville has ever done, or could do, will mitigate the slightest degree my hatred for himself and name, and you will oblige me by immediately making arrangements for the duel."

Paul Van Loo seemed surprised, and drawing a sword from his scabbard tested its temper, while Arthur Grenville walked toward his brother, who had not seemed to hear the effort made at a reconciliation between himself and his enemy.

A few moments more, and throwing aside their coats the two men stood facing each other, swords in hand, for, as the challenged party, Lance Grenville had chosen those weapons, and his motive for doing so was soon evident, for a superb master in fence, he had determined to disarm his antagonist and give him his life.

A few paces, and the blade of Colonel Darrington was twisted from his hand; but, without following up his advantage, Lance Grenville lowered the point of his weapon, and said, calmly:

"For the sake of Lucille, sir, I will give you your life."

"My life I will not accept at your hands, sir, and as you have proven my master with the sword, the pistol will place us upon a more equal footing," and Ferd Darrington was white with rage, and seeing that he was defeated, Paul Van Loo had no alternative but to take from their velvet case the long dueling pistols.

With a bow, Lance Grenville signified his acceptance of the weapons, and a second meeting, and soon the two splendid-looking men again faced each other at ten paces apart.

"Here, Lance, and for God's sake, do not let that man kill you," and Arthur Grenville placed the loaded pistol in his brother's hand.

Lance Grenville made no reply, but a grim smile crossed his face, and he stood like a statue awaiting the word.

"It soon came, given by Paul Van Loo: 'Gentlemen, are you ready?'"

Both men bowed.

"Fire! One!"

With the word one, the pistol of Ferd Darrington exploded, and a dull thud was heard, while Lance Grenville started slightly, and moved one step backward; but, instantly, he recovered himself, and suddenly raising his pistol fired above his head at a red-bird—in hue a fit songster for that scene—that sat singing in a tree above the heads of the two men.

Instantly the red-bird fell from his perch, his head severed by the bullet from Lance Grenville's pistol—a splendid specimen of marksmanship.

Paul Van Loo sprang to the side of Colonel Darrington, crying:

"Colonel, you saw his shot! He has twice saved your life, and I beg now that this affair end here."

The white lips of Ferd Darrington parted, and the words were hushed out:

"Demand another fire! Load those pistols again, Van Loo!"

"It rests with Mr. Grenville, whether he will meet you again," said Paul Van Loo, evidently hurt at the determined hate of his principal.

"My brother has twice risked his life, and twice spared that of Colonel Darrington. I will not consent to another fire," said Lieutenant Grenville hotly.

"Then I shall hold him responsible whenever and wherever I meet him, after leaving this field," came the quick retort.

Arthur, if it has to come to chance encounter to settle this affair, let it end here. I will exchange shots again with Colonel Darrington," said Lance, and his lips slightly quivered as though with some inward emotion that was choking him.

Again the two men faced each other, and once more the word was given to fire, and both pistols were discharged together.

As the smoke drifted away, Colonel Darrington was discovered lying his full length upon the ground, while Lance Grenville stood with folded arms, gazing in astonishment upon him, and with an expression of intense sorrow in his face.

"I have killed him, Arth, and Lucille will now curse me."

There was a depth of feeling in the words that proved how terribly the strong man suffered, and Arthur Grenville made no reply.

"Yes, he is dead. But, Grenville, you acted most nobly; are you not hurt?" and Paul Van Loo arose from the side of the dead man and approached Lance Grenville.

"At the first fire his bullet struck here—see!" This turned its course from my heart, and it gave me a mere flesh wound, and he took from his breast-pocket a miniature set in a heavy gold case.

But the glass was shattered to atoms, the gold indented, and the face that had been painted

thereon, was deeply marred by the bullet, and yet both Paul Van Loo and Arthur Grenville saw that it was the miniature likeness of Lucille Darrington that had saved the life of Lance Grenville!

Take the carriage, Paul, to bear his body home, and we will follow your horses," said Lance Grenville sadly, and mounting the very animal ridden there by Colonel Darrington, the unhappy man rode away, followed by his brother, who felt deeply for him in his sorrow, and yet secretly that the affair had terminated as it had.

In the meantime Paul Van Loo, aided by the servants, had placed the body in the carriage, which at once rolled rapidly away toward the Darrington villa, where the longing, staring eyes of Lucille, who had been waiting with a cry of joy she springing to her feet, for she recognized the vehicle, and believed that those who had gone forth with deadly intent had returned as friends.

Eagerly she watched the carriage, saw it halt before the broad stairs, the door open, and then, as her eyes fell on the dark, dead face of her father, she uttered a shriek of anguish and fell heavily upon the floor, where she lay like one whose life-cords had snapped in twain.

CHAPTER III. A WOMAN'S CURSE.

TOWARD the close of day, several years after the death of Colonel Darrington by the hand of Launcelot Grenville, a rakish-looking schooner was standing in the Gulf, and a single-stemmed small cove, sheltered by a heavily-wooded point of land of what is now the coast of the State of Mississippi.

That the schooner was an armed craft was evident at a glance, for her hull and rig, for vessels of her long, narrow hull, and single-stem masts that raked far aft, with an almost piratical air, were not found in the merchant service.

As she drew nearer the land, a person would have discerned upon her decks four guns to a broadside, and a crew of sixty men were idly grouped about, looking at the pretty villa plantations that dotted the coast.

Upon the quarter-deck were several officers, who, like the men, had a foreign air, and whose dark faces, medium-sized statures and bright eyes denoted that they were of Mexican origin.

The officers wore uniforms, elaborately trimmed with gold lace, and the sailors were attired in blue shirts, white duck pants, and skull-caps encircled by a white band, which was embroidered in green silk a serpent.

One person upon the quarter-deck stood near the helmsman, directing him how to steer, and that this man commanded the destinies of the schooner was evident at a glance.

Possessing a tall, commanding form, attired in a costly uniform, and with a strikingly handsome face, in which a settled sadness was blended with sternness, he was a man both to fear and admire, and always to respect.

Scarcely his eyes ran along the shores, and the wind being from the west, he gave an order to the helmsman to head toward a certain point, where the white walls of a villa gleamed through a dense mass of foliage.

As the schooner neared the shore the sun went down behind the western horizon, and half a score of small pleasure yachts that were sailing upon the waters, filled with gay parties, headed for their respective anchorages, and darkness settled upon the sea, just as the armed vessel swept up into the wind and dropped anchor within a quarter of a mile from the land.

Instantly the sails were lowered and furled, and the schooner rode quietly upon the waves, as silent as though the three-score men upon her decks had gone to rest.

Thus the hour passed away, and then a reddish glare was visible on the eastern horizon, and into the clear skies sailed the moon, convoked by fleets of stars upon her way.

As the silvery beams of light marked a path across the rippling waters, a boat was lowered over the schooner's side, and a single personage, who seized the oars and pulled with a strong, quick stroke toward the shore.

As the moonlight fell upon his face it displayed the officer who had guided the schooner to her anchorage.

Landing under the shelter of the cliff he dragged the boat half out of the water, by a slight effort of his great strength, and quickly ascended to the hill above.

Here he paused, and a shudder ran through his frame, as he stood with his arms gazing down upon an open, grass-covered spot in front of him.

"Here am I again upon the scene that has proven so fatal to my name," he muttered, in a low, deep voice.

"A spot where I buried every hope for the future, and a love that almost drives me to madness when I recall what I lost; but, God knows I was driven to it, and that a bitter curse has dogged my footsteps."

For a moment he remained in silence, and his face grew cold and stern, as he seemed brooding over the past; then again he spoke in the same deep tones:

"What devilish impulse has brought me here I cannot tell; but, certain it is an irresistible desire has made me come again to the scenes where I have suffered so much."

"A short mile from here, and but a year ago, I stood upon a gallows, condemned to die, a Cain-accursed man; but, through the love and courage of my faithful sister, escaped, and my own hand struck down the beastly murderer, who had sworn my life away as my brother's murderer—that dearly-loved brother who now lives doubtless happy in the love of the woman who so charged me as gulf of the crime of Cain."

And he glanced down the coast, where lights glimmered from the windows of a lordly house, once his own.

"Ah me; how bitterly cruel Fate has dogged my steps, and now led me back to this spot—and why?"

"God knows why; but I am the football of destiny and must not hesitate now but go where-soever my guardian angel, be she good or evil, would lead me—and she leads me yonder."

He turned abruptly and glanced in the other direction from the villa, where the lights were visible, and there his eyes rested upon another house half a mile distant—the place toward which the schooner had headed when a league out from the land.

With a hasty step he strode away from the spot that seemed to recall such painful memories, and crossing the highway approached a massive gateway that seemed crumbling rapidly to decay by total neglect.

Springing over the fence he stood hesitating in the grounds, which were overgrown with rank weeds and underbrush, while back a few hundred paces arose dark and gloomy the walls of a large mansion, now almost hidden by the dense growth of trees surrounding it.

"There she lived, and—perhaps died; but whether she is alive or dead I will soon know, for yonder burying-ground will tell the story."

"Was said she committed suicide after she knew her father fell by my hand, and then that story was contradicted and none knew where she had gone."

"She cannot live in yonder old mansion, which Time is rapidly making a ruin of; but I shall see—Ha!"

Quickly he bounded into the shadow of the massive gateway as the roll of wheels came to his ears, and an instant later a carriage appeared on the highway, while its occupants, discussing the presence of the rakish-looking schooner lying at anchor so near inland, and which the moonlight plainly revealed, floating as silent as a coffin upon the waters.

As the carriage rolled on, and I will not have an instant's sleep until it sails away," said a merry voice in the vehicle, while another answered in girlish tones:

"Oh, I would so like it to be a buccaneer craft, commanded by a dashing, handsome young chief."

Then the carriage rolled on out of hearing of the man crouching in the shadow, and the moonlight showed a grim look upon his face as he arose to his full height again.

"Ah, no, my fair friends, yonder craft does not blot the skull and crossbones at her peak; though Heaven knows I have had cause enough to make a very devil out of me; but I must not stand here," and he again pushed on, carefully, though fearlessly approaching the house.

Look behind you, to the broad steps, which trembled beneath his feet, he walked noiselessly round the piazza to the rear of the mansion and there suddenly halted, as a dim light shone from the window.

With step as noiseless and stealthy as that of a panther he crept up and glanced in at the open window.

He beheld a room that had once been handsomely furnished, but the furniture was now worn and faded, yet still had an air of neatness upon all.

A table, upon which stood a lamp, sat an old negress in a calico dress and bandana handkerchief, engaged in knitting, while she hummed in a low voice a camp-meeting air, keeping slow time with her needles.

Upon a chair near the broad fireplace, in which glowed a few coals, was an old negress, his head frosted with the snows of three-score and ten years.

He held a pipe between his lips and was gazing into the fire with that listless, thoughtless look habitual to old age, which gives the idea that those nearing the grave are ever looking back into the bygone with memories only said.

From the room were two doors, one evidently leading out upon a back piazza and the other into what appeared a bedroom.

"Here I can learn what I would know about her; but I will first seek yonder, for I would not be seen here by any one, if I can avoid it."

So saying the man retraced his way around the piazza, and descending the steps went toward the grounds in the direction of a distant grove of trees.

Crossing an open lawn or field he skulked rapidly along as the moonlight fell full upon him, and hastily darted into the shadow of the trees.

Was the same grove that had been the fatal trying-place of Launcelot Grenville and Lucille Darrington years before; but here, as upon the mansion, rested an air of neglect and decay, for the little fence that inclosed the burying-ground was half-broken down, and the graves were overgrown with weeds.

Lucille Darrington's grave, which marked the resting-places of the dead, for one was free from rude growth upon it, and the marble at its head shone pure and white in the moonlight.

Quickly the man bent over and read the inscription:

"ERECTED TO THE MEMORY
OF
MY FATHER,
FERDINAND DARRINGTON,
WHO FELL BY THE HAND OF
LAUNCELOT VERTNER GRENVILLE,
Who, by his act, buried in this grave my every hope
in life."

With a groan of unspeakable anguish the man staggered back, while from his white lips broke the cry:

"Oh, how I have mercy! I needed but this blow from her to fill my cup of bitterness to overflowing. Lucille, oh, Lucille! how you have misjudged me, and how your love has turned to hate, to cause you to place there on enduring marble the story of the fatal act of mine against your father."

The proud head was lowered, and the gaunt, gloved hands crept up and hid the face, as though to shut out the scene from view.

For some moments he stood thus, his strong frame quivering, like a leaf shaken by the wind, and then he started, for a clear, ringing voice, suddenly spoke his name:

"Launcelot Grenville!"

Instantly the eyes of the man fell upon the form of a woman standing ten feet from him, and where the light of the moon, penetrating the foliage, fell full upon her.

As motionless as though carved in stone, dressed in pure white, and with her wealth of hair hanging loose over her shoulders and down her back, she looked like some ghostly inhabitant risen from the grave at her feet.

Though her face was youthful, it was livid, and each feature was imprinted with the mark of sorrow and suffering, while her hair was as white as the moonlight, and her eyes like silver threads in the light of the moon.

One arm was outstretched, and the index finger pointed straight at the man before her, while upon it sparkled, like molten fire, a ruby of immense size and wondrous beauty.

She seemed to speak, to move, but neither tongue nor feet would obey his will, and he, too, stood motionless, the two, with the weird, strange scene around them, making a startling, fearful tableau, one which few people would care to look upon in reality.

A moment they stood thus, and then once more the full, rich tones of the woman's voice were heard.

"Launcelot Grenville, how dare you stand there by the grave of the man whom you destroyed?"

"Lucille! Lucille!"

The cry was like that of a lost soul imploring mercy, and the gold-braided arms were stretched forth in earnest supplication; but he made no step toward the woman, from whom now came the hoarse tones of intensified passion:

"Launcelot Grenville, I curse you!"

(To be continued.)

NIGHT.

BY WILLIAM TENNYSON HEATON.

Girl with misty memories sublime,
Look on her crowned with stars!
She was a queen in her time,
And sat by Nilus' bars.
Of all the kings and queens of earth,
She trails her glory yet,
She dwells to the planets birth,
And has nothing to regret.

Lucille.

BY LAIL GAY.

A PHAETON, velvet-lined, drawn by cream-colored ponies, rolled along the beach. In it sat Mrs. Ralph Strathmore, a young, graceful woman, with inscrutable brown eyes, that looked as if they held some secret that hung like the sword of Damocles over her.

She had driven along carelessly as if indifferent where she went, and had taken a road little used, which the long roll of the ocean almost claimed in its briny caress. Further on some fine grassy meadow, she saw a way with a boat, which she did not notice until the ponies shied at the strange obstruction.

One of the men suddenly sprang at the bits and held them with a grasp of iron. He stared at Mrs. Strathmore, first with a curiosity that became a stare, and then, wavering in unbelief, and settled into recognition.

As for her she seemed powerless to move, but gazed in dumb horror with dilated eyes at him. She gathered the reins at last and turned her pony back toward the beach, and reached the hotel, gave the lines to her groom, and walked quickly to her room. Her husband rose smilingly to meet her.

"What ails you, Lucille? You look as if you had seen a ghost. Did your ponies run away, or was it some accident?" he anxiously inquired.

"My ponies behaved admirably. I feel tired; that is all."

"I shall not let you go alone again. I shall only feel safe when you are with me."

"And I only feel safe when you are with me. Ralph, you must not let me go alone, will you? Never again if you hear anything that would make you hate me!" she asked, eagerly.

"I will always love you, pet," he said, ear-

nestly, as he stooped and kissed her. "What made you imagine such an absurdity?"

"I cannot tell you. If ever I lose your love I have nothing else to live for. I wish you would take me away from here, Ralph. I am sick of it all. The hollow gaiety and society-life that has no depth. Let us go to some quiet country place where we can have rest."

"Rest," she repeated to herself—"would she ever again know rest in this world?"

"Leave Newport, when you were so anxious to come? Where you reign queen of society and leave it for some rural retreat? I am too proud of you to be selfish enough to hide your precious self in seclusion."

"Are you proud of me, Ralph, of your wife? Do you never have a regret that you married me, penniless and friendless?"

"Never a regret, never. But, Lucille, you certainly must be ill. You have lost entirely that elegant repose of manner I so admire in you. You tremble and are pallid."

"It is nothing—a slight indisposition, that is all," and she passed her hand wearily across her eyes as if to shut out the face of the man by the shore.

"No, I will not go down this evening but remain in my room," she said, in answer to her husband's inquiry whether she was ready for supper.

When he left she sunk down in a chair with a stifled moan. It had come at last! The haunting fear that had followed her for years was now confirmed. The ghostly doubt would not be buried. She had piled miles of distance and years of absence upon its grave, and here it was in the face of her joy.

She thought of her childhood. Her life seemed mapped out before her. And, try as she would to forget to-night, a drawing fascination kept the one idea constantly before her.

When she was a child, her father and mother she remembered but dimly; they had died when she was a tender child. She would have been homeless had not Daniel Simpson and his wife, kindly neighbors, given her a home and place in their hearts. They were rough, but friendly people, and she remembered, with a little pang of abasement, had made her their idol. The best their cabin afforded, or any small luxury they could possess, was given to pretty Lucille, as they called her.

Daniel had one son, John, who was always her slave. He would do anything to win a smile from her, and thought no task too difficult to please her. What then more natural when they grew older than that they should be married? Daniel and his wife advised it. John loved her—she could remember that now, and she was but sixteen.

She wondered, vaguely, if she could have ever been that little Lucille, who watched for the coming of John from his labors—rough, unpolished John.

And yet she had longings even then of a higher life. The common surroundings annoyed her, and their uncouth actions and coarser language rasped her own ideas of the fitness of things. John, poor John, was always kind—wearisomely so, but tender of his wife, his Lucille.

One day in winter he had bade her good-by for a few days, he said. He must go fifty miles to attend to some business, but father and mother would care for her while he was gone. Day followed day, and snows piled their flakey whiteness high over all. John's father watched anxiously for his boy who came not at the time appointed. Two weeks passed, and they were told that John was missing. He could not be found; he had never reached the end of his journey, and he was dead. How he died they knew not, but search proved unavailing.

They pitied the poor young wife; so sudden! they said. As for her, she felt an irresistible longing to get away. Now that John was dead she felt that she could never live there always, with the toil and hardships of her life. She wanted to come East, of which she had heard rumors from a fair tale. Unknown to Daniel and his wife she made arrangements to leave.

When she reached St. Louis, she wondered, suddenly, how she was to live. But, she would find work; some one, surely, would employ her. While waiting in the depot she espied a man who looked kind, she thought. She asked him if he knew where she "could get work." Mr. Strathmore, the patrician face took on an amused expression, as if he was an Intelligence Office he told her afterward.

But on looking more attentively, he stared with undisguised surprise. Here was a type of beauty in this wildflower he had searched for vainly. She told him not her real story, but said she came a long distance—that the past held no pleasant memories, and she wanted to forget it.

She married Ralph Strathmore, who took her abroad where teachers and travel added polish and elegance to her uncultivated mind.

Her gratitude to him grew to love, and of the deepest intensity. And the thought suddenly came to her—what if John had not died after all! No one saw his death; might it not be possible—but no! she put the idea away, shudderingly. She was happy in Ralph's love; the past had been so dreary it must not be raised again.

That she had done wrong she knew. She never told her husband, who kindly said, if there was anything unpleasant in her history not to relate it; he loved her and believed her perfect in every way.

And the face of the fisherman she saw that afternoon was John Simpson, her husband! No, she would not call him that. He was here. What is to prevent him from searching for her or telling Ralph?

"It must not be, it shall not be!" moaned the wretched woman, walking excitedly up and down. "I can not bear to see Ralph's face grow stern and white with the knowledge that I have deceived him."

The next day she did not drive out; she scarcely looked from the window for fear his face would meet her. But still she thought it might be barely possible he did not know her. That he would pursue his humble occupation without daring to thrust himself into the presence of her and fashion.

She walked to the mirror and surveyed herself. Would he know her?

She saw there a tall figure, graceful and undulating. A glory of golden hair, straight eyebrows above brown, glowing eyes—eyes that to-night held a startled look in their somber depths and a pathos in their brown shadows. A dress of satin, rose-tinted, with delicate lace draped over it and palpitating with filmy whiteness.

You look like Venus emerging from the ocean," said her husband admiringly. "Your dress has the rosy hue of the sea shell, the lace drifts over it like the foam of the waters, and your pearls are from the empire of Neptune himself. How peerlessly beautiful you are!"

Would she be if he knew all? she thought! "Have I improved since you knew me? Do I appear the same person?" she inquired anxiously.

"No," he responded, smiling a little at the contrast; then you were the ghostly, very, very magnificent self. I can scarcely realize you are the same woman."

Ralph Strathmore was wealthy, refined and proud. His marrying Lucille was done in a moment of the moment, but one act which he never regretted. As she had no friends, so he solicited, she had no poor, common relations, who, claiming his wife as kin, might have subjected him to unpleasant associations. He had given her the name of Lucille—Lizzie not being suitable for her, he said. He had no curiosity to inquire into her past life, thinking it would be only a record of poverty and hardship, which would jar upon his finer sensibilities. Now, as his wife, she was beautiful, accomplished and refined. What more could he ask?

That night, after a wait, Mrs. Strathmore and her partner stepped to one of the long windows opening on the porch. Looking in outside was the face of all faces she dreaded to see. Gazing in fixedly, with an expression of joy shining over his

wind he always told by the peculiar location of the stitch in his side. He paid but little attention to reports from signal stations, and told me to say nothing about it, which I promised not to do.

BEAT TIME.

BY HARRIET MABEL SPALDING.

A Great Mistake.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

an old man's love and his name, and his
 name. Gladys! My darling, is it?"
 For she had bewitched him, and—all his magnificent
 fortune, his princely home, the grand old
 man, the unassailable position as his wife
 and mistress of Sunnylands, were lying at her
 feet, to be cast or rejected.
 It was a wonderful streak of fortune, and
 Gladys had told herself so, over and over, in
 the twenty-four hours since Mr. Sardis had
 made his offer of marriage to her.
 And she had been right, for only—hand-
 some Clyde had been so strange concerning
 the truth than she had believed.
 Gladys had dared whisper to herself when
 he had said that for such as she love should be lord
 of all.
 And she never could, by any possibility, care
 for Clyde's grandfather, a wife, all his courtly
 manliness and his riches and his position, be-
 cause—she loved the grandson, the magnificent
 young fellow who was confidently expected to
 make love to and marry Isidore Duncan.
 And she had been right, for a great wrenching pain at
 her heart that was a strange commingling of
 anger and disappointment and jealousy and
 misery, as she imagined Clyde and Miss Duncan
 off riding together in the sweet May sunset.
 And she had been right, for she had seen
 Clyde's Sardis gently interrupted her wandering
 thoughts.
 "Well, Gladys! Remember I have been pa-
 tient for twenty-four hours, and now I want to
 know how it is to be. Child—can you let me
 know you for my blessing, my treasure? Come
 to me and love me with all your fresh
 young blood? Because, unless you can, I
 would rather you would frankly tell me what
 will be a sore distress to me."
 To be mistress of Sunnylands. To own the
 very horses and carriage with which Isidore
 Duncan had been wont to ride. To rise higher
 than the haughty woman who paid her
 dollars a month for services rendered. To have
 diamonds and signed blank checks—should she
 If only she could crush down that fierce long-
 ing for Clyde Sardis; if only—
 And Clyde had a very ancient family cry.
 "Mr. Sardis said; 'you are aware that Clyde
 and Isidore will be married in a few months,
 and unless you come to be my little wife, I shall
 be very lonely, all to myself.'"
 It was Isidore's cry, for suddenly swiftly-pa-
 inced face, and for just one anguishful little min-
 ute his breath seemed leaving her lungs, her
 heart seemed as if grasped in a cruel iron hand,
 and then—it was over, and she smiled in an-
 swer.
 "And it is because I cannot comprehend why you
 should want me, Mr. Sardis. If you really
 do—"
 She had no need to finish her sentence, for
 Mr. Sardis drew her to him in a sudden, glad
 embrace.
 "My own little love! You never, never shall
 regret this. If ever a woman experienced what
 it was to be an old man's darling, it shall be you,
 my Gladys!"
 And, after she had hoped to her room, she
 walked up and down, and down, and up, in
 white, drawn face that would have horrified
 both of the two men, with her small, fair hands
 tightly clenched, trying to beat down the agony
 of jealous longing for Clyde Sardis, with his
 eyes, and his face, and his voice, and his
 voice, and masterly way that had completely
 conquered her. Once that evening she went up
 to Mr. Sardis as he sat at an open window—in
 a leading little way that was absolutely ir-
 resistible.
 "Please don't mention our—our engagement,
 will you? It will be unpleasant for me—until
 I get a little used to it. Wait until I tell you,
 will you, please?"
 He caressed the fingers that lay so lightly and
 sweetly on his arm.
 "If you wish it so, Gladys. It is fortunate
 that you spoke so early, for I had fully intend-
 ed to explain it all to Mrs. Sardis and Isidore
 Clyde, when they have finished their croquet."
 It was Isidore's husky way of speaking, now.
 And, despite that prompt, gentlemanly suc-
 quence to her whim, Gladys also comprehended
 he would have preferred it otherwise.
 "When they finished their croquet," Mr. Sar-
 dis had said; and when they finished it, Mrs.
 Sardis and Isidore had been to the garden
 on the brilliantly-lighted parlor where the old
 gentleman sat—and Clyde went straight to the
 dusky corner in the adjoining room—the music-
 room and Mrs. Sardis's morning parlor—where
 he had been wont to sit, and to smoke, and to
 look out into the starry darkness.
 "I will not intrude, Miss Saxehurst," he said,
 lightly and half-inquiringly, as he went up to
 her, so near that he could see her ravishingly
 beautiful face that was even more glorified by
 the peculiar shadow-light that came from the
 ceiling of her hands that lay like a lily petal
 on the arm of the chair, the self-same hand his
 courtly old grandfather had kissed scarcely an
 hour before, he drew her to him—up from the
 garden.
 "Because," he said in a quick, passionate
 whisper that thrilled every nerve in her frame,
 because I will come to you, anyhow. I have
 been dying of impatience to finish what I would
 have said this afternoon."
 Gladys would love him, you must love
 him! Will you? Darling, do you?"
 Beyond the hopelessness of it, the cruelty of it,
 the feeling that he was engaged to Isidore Duncan,
 the speechless ecstasy of it all surged like a
 wave of fire through her veins.
 Just one little moment of weakness, or rather
 of desperate reckless longing and heart-aching
 to his handsome pleader who had no more
 right to speak than she had to listen—Gladys
 had been so near that she had almost kissed him,
 made him stoop and kiss the quivering crimson
 lips, over and over, and hold her close to his
 breast. Only for one little, little second; and
 then, she broke away from him with an impatient,
 despairing little cry.
 "What can you come of this, even if
 we love so love each other! Clyde! Clyde Sardis,
 was there ever such sarcasm of fate before?
 We love each other, and you are to marry
 Isidore Duncan, while I am engaged to—your
 grandfather!"
 She fairly flung the last words at him, and
 he, looked as if she was speaking random words.
 "What are you saying, my darling? I am to
 marry Miss Duncan? Perhaps people think so,
 but certainly it is not so, as the lady herself can
 testify. But I must understand what you mean
 by saying you are engaged to marry my
 grandfather, Gladys."
 An anguishful little cry came from her lips,
 and she shrunk back into the chair again.
 "What can you mean, my darling? I am to
 marry—and—my heart almost broke, but I
 told him yes—Clyde! oh, for God's sake, don't
 look at me like that! I loved you so—I love you
 so!"
 For look of sudden disapproval and gravity
 was merging into one of scorn and contemptuous
 displeasure.
 "It certainly was a strange way to manifest
 our love, Gladys. And see here. Somehow,
 I have—hurt me. I couldn't think of being a
 part of—my grandfather's. Let us forget it
 all."
 And he turned away from her, all his feel-
 ings in a state of revulsion for this fair creature
 who would have so deliberately sold herself.
 Just as old Clyde had been wont to do, the
 old man, and up to her, kindly, resolutely, as
 one does who feels morally obliged to discipline
 a erring child.
 "Nor could I dream of marrying the woman
 who is in love with my grandson. Gladys—we
 have been so close to each other, but—thank God,
 it is rectified in time." As Clyde said, it will be
 best to forget it all."
 And poor Gladys Saxehurst! Do you reserve
 or her conscience or pity?
 We have never been able to understand how
 it is that a woman who is apparently deaf when
 her husband asks her where that bad-looking
 fellow is, and who is so wonderfully quick when
 he is about to bed, can hear the whir of her two weeks'
 old baby down two flights of stairs and through
 three dead doors.

BY JOHN H. WHITSON

Divorced but Not Divided; OR, HIS GUIDING STAR.

BY "A PARSON'S DAUGHTER."

AUTHOR OF "BETH FOSS," "THE PRETTY PURITAN," ETC.

PTER X.

A SELF-WILLED WOMAN.
 "For if she will, she will, you may depend on't;

THE morning after Mrs. Terrell's

you!" with a shade of anxiety not characteristic of her.

Grith looked indifferently that he was far from feeling, as he answered:

"Is not Atterbury your lawyer? It would not do to interfere with another man's client."

"Yes, Mr. Atterbury has managed my business since the death of my father and Mr. St. Martyn," she said, "but I am sure, secondly, and I do not care to have him take this matter in hand. To tell the truth, Griffs," laughing, "I am afraid he will think it a foolhardy affair altogether and consider it his duty to attempt to advise and dissuade me."

"And you imagine I will do your will, blindly?"

"I am willing to try you," she retorted, gayly.

"And what is this rash undertaking, in which you need a lawyer's assistance?"

"Do you promise to devote yourself to it?"

"I promise to devote myself to your interests, always, Elinor."

But when Mrs. St. Martyn had narrated the events of the previous evening, he exclaimed, impatiently:

"And you expect me to encourage you to commit yourself further to this preposterous affair? I never heard of such madness! I would not have supposed you capable of doing any such mad, headstrong thing. You must leave the matter drop immediately, Elinor, and I will take steps to see that your name does not go abroad in connection with it!"

Mrs. St. Martyn trifled with her flowers while he spoke, only a sparkling glow in her cheeks betraying the irritation which he caused. Her imperious words, and when he had finished, she glanced full in his face, with eyes haughtily dark and determined, and a chill, scornful smile.

"You might have spared yourself the waste of so much breath and energy," he said, "in giving to your opinion of my acts, but whether you were willing to make a professional engagement with me. It was quite easy to say *no*. There are dozens of lawyers and detectives who are prepared to begin the affair in charge, the preferred you because you had no right to and intimate that you cared for me, and I supposed you would interest yourself to prosecute the matter thoroughly and privately. I will determine upon some one else, immediately."

"Elinor, you certainly do not stand and look leaning there and looking down at her. For a moment his eyes blazed and his lips were compressed, ominously. Yet there was something in the beauty's very anger that attracted him. He would have never commanded her, yet he longed to conquer her."

"Do you mean," he said, presently, very calmly, "that you have fully made up your mind to continue your connection with this affair in direct opposition to any one's or every one's advice?"

"I mean that I have given my promise to a dying woman; and I will not break it, no matter how unpleasant or even terrible are the consequences I am forced to face in order to keep it!"

"Elinor, you certainly do not anticipate any personal unpleasantness?" he said, seriously, going and bending over her chair.

"Whatever I anticipate, I offered you the chance to learn the worst and to do for me your best. I am sorry to be disappointed," she answered, carelessly, yet looking up at him with a smile.

He changed his position, suddenly, took her hands in his and bent above her face with eyes passionate and full of compelling witchery.

"Queen Elinor, command me—if you love me."

"You are unfair, Griffs. I will not buy your services so."

"Nonsense, my friend! If you are determined to oppose this matter, let me be the person to assist you. But, seriously, Mrs. St. Martyn, do you not think it rash to commit yourself to the unravelling of this mystery?"

"I think, and know, and admit, that it was rash to engage in such a strange affair," she answered. "Elinor, you certainly do not appreciate it, but I have been through a hundred times beyond what you can, Griffs. But I fully believe that it was a decree of fate which I was controlled; and I shall go on with what I have undertaken. I cannot make any other plan. I am determined to help to set right a wrong done to an innocent individual. So all that we need discuss now is how to soonest sift this affair to the bottom. I have ordered my carriage and am going to Mrs. Lane's immediately to interview her nephew."

"I will," assented Griffs, commencing himself to Mrs. St. Martyn's purpose without further protest, or a dream of the future he was thus to work out for himself.

"I thank you. I must ask you to excuse me, now, while I change my dress. I shall not keep you waiting over ten minutes."

As she spoke a card was brought her upon which was penciled, underneath the name, a message, asking her for an immediate interview.

"Mr. Octavian Trefethen!" she exclaimed, dropping the card upon the table. "I shall have to see him! It must be a matter of importance which impels him to pay a call—something very important, I am inclined to say, perhaps. Is it not enough that I forget my duty to get them to meet me in time for the party?" she concluded, hastening to her visitor and not dreaming that she left Grith to unpleasant meditations aroused by the name she had read.

"Elinor, you must have an appointment to receive him," said the elderly Frenchman. "I was brief, but the favor he had come to ask seemed to Mrs. St. Martyn, at first, perfectly astounding; and she was not quite sure where she had promised it, and he had thanked her for it. I will tell you the story. He had come to receive her at his own home the next day, and she had not assumed a responsibility that would suggest to society that she had quite taken leave of her senses. But Elinor was not afraid to defy criticism, and the whole affair was so novel and unusual."

"Well," she concluded, mentally, as she hastened to prepare for her dinner, "I certainly have enough new interests upon my hands now. Really, it never rains but it pours! Ah! Myra, Myra, I shall be late! I must hurry. I will have to pale you! You do not romp enough."

"You ask mamma to get you ready for a ride with me, if you are not afraid to sit in the carriage alone, or up on the box with James, while Mr. Trefethen is here?"

"Oh, not one bit!" cried Myra, in happy excitement. And when Mrs. St. Martyn joined her young attorney, she had the little girl with her, and Griffs put them in the carriage, asking as he took his own place:

"What a fine fellow! What a misanthropic relative to prove an agreeable caller!"

"He proved a startling one. He came to ask me to mix myself up with another romance."

"Elinor?"

"Oh! I will say more than that when I tell you!" she laughed. "He has adopted a daughter, or ward, or *protégée*, or whatever you choose to call her, and desires me to act as chaperone to the girl."

"You will never do it!" cried Griffs, in disgust.

"On the contrary, I shall! It will be so novel, you see. Wonders never cease. Who knows what startling results may be brought about through the social *débit* of this adopted cousin of yours?"

CHAPTER XI.

STRAWS.

"Take a straw and throw it up into the air, you may see by that which way the wind is."

—JOHN SELDEN.

MRS. ST. MARTYN'S carriage stood before the dingy boarding-house where Christabel Leighton lived, a little, seamy, grave, and childish face looked out at its open window, when a man came down the walk—a tall man with a handsome face somewhat hidden by a large but not unbecoming slouch hat. Reaching the stone steps he turned his attention to the carriage, and when he saw that the young man stood in the sun at the head of his horses, and the stranger crossed the walk and pleasantly addressed the child:

"Whose carriage is this?"

"Mrs. St. Martin's," answered Myra, gravely.

"Ah! And she has gone inside?" indicating the house.

"Yes, sir; she and Mr. Gilruth."

"Gilruth? Judge Gilruth?"

"Do not know; Mrs. St. Martin calls him Griffs."

An unpleasant smile flickered across the man's lips. Then he asked, insinuatingly:

"And what is your name, little girl?"

"Myra Taylor, sir."

The questioner started, visibly; and gazed so intently at Myra's face that the child shrunk back, timidly.

"Myra Taylor! Then you are not Mrs. St. Martin's little girl?" he resumed, persuasively.

"How comes she to take you riding?"

"Mamma and I live with Mrs. St. Martin's," said Myra, wishing to get away.

"What does 'mamma' do?"

"She is Mrs. St. Martin's maid."

"Oh!"

Apparently satisfied with his investigations the questioner turned toward the house and at that moment a young woman came out of the basement door and spoke a few hurried words to him. It was scarcely a minute before she disappeared again, and he, too, had walked on.

In the meantime Elinor and Griffs were in the room where lay the dead stranger. According to Mrs. St. Martin's command the body had already been arrayed in a delicate white shroud and placed in a plain rosewood coffin; and now the room was filled with a stifling heat, which had been distorted by excitement and anguish, had settled into repose, Christabel Letronne's was seen to be a beautiful countenance, and one that bore the unmistakable traces of those ravages which often made the spirit and passionate heart of a woman so different from the face. Her eyes looked than any beauty of color or contour. Her fair profuse hair waved back from a marble-white brow, and her lashes were singularly long and silken. The mouth, too, with its waxen lips, spoke even yet of its once curving loveliness.

To Griffs the face of the dead woman was but a pretty interesting, and only in a professional way; but for Mrs. St. Martin it held an inexhaustible store of sensation. She scanned its every lineament long and anxiously. The eyes of the bright hair with tender grace over the white forehead, and lingered at the side of the coffin figure, thoughtful and sad, while Griffs questioned and cross-questioned Mrs. Lane.

"What is the history of this house?" he would tell concerning her lodger was soon learned. Mrs. Letronne was from New Orleans. She was adydike and paid in advance. She went out a great deal, and had a daily paper brought her for the news of the day and the persons. One day when she was going out she asked Mrs. Lane had a safe. The landlady said that she kept no safe, but a strong chest that she kept locked in a closet. Mrs. Letronne then requested a package put in there, and said that it contained linen. Mrs. Lane asked if the package was square and thick, tied with ribbon, and sealed with wax stamped with the ring that Mrs. Letronne wore. Mrs. Lane knew that the package was safe the day previous to the boarder's death. She had no occasion to get more money from her chest and saw it there; but she could not say at what time after that the chest and chest had been opened. Mrs. Letronne had been more or less a subject of speculation in the neighborhood, and among the boarders; but she had made no acquaintance, and had no communications concerning herself or her business; and Mrs. Lane and her eldest daughter, Dora, had been the only persons who knew of the package and its contents.

Mrs. Lane's statement was entirely corroborative of her mother's. She affirmed that neither of them had any idea that the package contained anything but papers, and that she mentioned its existence to no one, and had no thought of its contents. The package, however, somehow, been made the victim of an adventure. Miss Dora was a rather stylish girl and self-possessed; answering the questions put by Griffs with a steady eye and almost unobtrusively. She had no occasion to say anything of unusual embarrassment or alarm.

"Elinor, can you take me directly to a detective agency? I shall put the matter into the best hands possible, and there is no time to be lost," said Mrs. Griffs, as he and Mrs. St. Martin took their departure. His professional enthusiasm thoroughly aroused.

"Certainly; give your order to James," answered Mrs. St. Martin, entering the carriage.

"Well, Myra, have you been lonely?"

"No, dear. Was a little frightened once."

"Why, dear?"

"A man stopped and spoke to me and asked me about the carriage, and you, and mamma, and me."

"There was James that he did not stop it! I must speak to him to keep better watch over you, and not let you be interviewed against your wishes," said Mrs. St. Martin, pleasantly.

Then, turning to Mr. Gilruth, "Well, Griffs, what is the result?"

"That at present it seems a mysterious case; but I have my doubts as to whether we shall not discover that landlady at the bottom of the mystery."

"No, Griffs. She is certainly honest. It is the daughter who knew of the package, she told, if any one. I do not like that girl."

"Is that a woman's intuition, purely?" questioned Gilruth, teasingly.

"Yes, a woman's intuition, purely."

"The girl is certainly honest, I shall feel constrained to keep a look-out upon Miss Dora Lane. Now I must soon bid you good-morning. I will attend to everything concerning this affair, personally, and nothing shall be left untried. I will be quick to get it out of its present tangle; dismiss it, and send you home to Mrs. Elinor. You need rest. You have been, and are, more worried than you care to acknowledge. Try to forget it. I will see to this evening at the opera, if not before."

"Thank you, Griffs. I shall tell Mrs. St. Martin, leaning her head against the satin upholstery of her carriage, and drawing her hand wearily across her eyes, when Griffs was gone. "If I only could! But I shall never be able to put that thought out of my mind, and I shall never be able to fulfill the promise I gave you. I shall tell Mrs. Letronne, to do the wrong she had done him! What wrong? What wrong had he suffered at her hands? What had he—this Jules Letronne—forgone her? This Christabel Letronne?" What was the cause of this? What was Jules Letronne—that was what he was called?" Where he? Where are the papers, the jewels, the proofs? Proofs of what? I could not go into eternity without undoing a terrible wrong I have done. I have sinned against, and sinned for, the person I sinned against. I ask him to forgive—forgive me."

Every word that Mrs. Letronne had uttered was engraven as distinctly upon Elinor's brain as the words of the thinking dead face, and she could not be lightly forgotten. She turned over to her mind, and echoed in the air about her, until she found herself in the same exhausted, nervous mood that had assailed her for a time the previous evening. But the little Myra's presence was a relief. She took her up, and she took the child from one shop to another, to show her pretty flowers and toys and pictures, until she found forgetfulness and pleasure in the little one's delight.

At a late lunch-time when Mrs. St. Martin reached home with her happy charge, and dismissing Myra with a kiss, hurriedly dressed for that meal. At the table she found Mrs. Allison—an elderly lady and distant relative who had acted as companion to the beautiful young widow ever since the death of Mr. St. Martin.

"Ah! Mrs. Allison, you are so much better? I am glad to see you down, again," Elinor said, kindly, stopping to shake hands with the mild-

"Thank you, dear."

"Mrs. Sara Allison was a soft-spoken, quiet-mannered old lady, who took genuine interest

in Mrs. St. Martyn, and all Mrs. St. Martyn's doings, and all Mrs. St. Martyn's friends, but was exceedingly sparing of words. Perhaps, it was that she stood a trifle in awe of the proud, brilliant society queen; certainly there was no great intimacy between the two, and the elder lady might not have appreciated how much unexpressed affection Elinor cherished for her. "I am going to increase my family," Mrs. Allison, said Elinor, brightly, when she had poured a cup of fragrant tea for her companion.

The person addressed looked as startled, and colored as vividly, as if Mrs. St. Martyn had announced some matrimonial scheme in her behalf.

"My dear," she said in a tone partly exclamatory, partly questioning, that she often used when surprised.

"Yes, actually," went on Elinor, lightly, recounting Sydney's story and Mr. Trefethen's plans concerning her.

"I am afraid it will be a source of trouble to you," remarked Mrs. Allison with strange precision. "I do not think this raising young persons above their station is to be approved."

"Now, I, on the contrary, but if there is any unpleasant responsibility in this case it will fall on Mr. Trefethen, and not on me. Really, I cannot see how the young lady can be a source of trouble to me, aside from superintending her manners and toilettes."

"Well, I hope she will not be, dear. I hope not."

"Mrs. St. Martyn! Mrs. St. Martyn!"

The door was thrown open, and Myra ran in, pale and trembling.

"Mamma is sick! won't you come?"

Elinor hastened up-stairs with the child.

"Where is mamma?" she asked.

"In her room."

"And what made her sick?"

"I don't know. I was telling her about my ride, and the man who spoke to me, and she fell over."

Mrs. St. Martyn found the dark-robed figure of her maid lying senseless upon the floor. But a spray of cologne and application of salts speedily restored her to consciousness.

"Myra! Myra! Where is she?" she asked in seeming fright, as she opened her eyes.

"Here," said her mistress, soothingly, pushing the child into the mother's arms.

Taylor clasped the little one close to her heart, and kissed her, again and again.

"What is the matter, Taylor?" questioned Mrs. St. Martyn, recalling the young woman fully to herself.

"Only a passing faintness, ma'am. Did Myra call you?"

"It was nothing," she said, hurriedly.

"Certainly you look ill. I shall not want you before evening—the dress can go; I will wear something else—and you must lie down for a few hours," said Mrs. St. Martyn, generously but impatiently. "I will send Myra to Mrs. Allison awhile."

"Oh, no! no! Myra will be still. Let her stay with me!"

Mrs. St. Martyn looked surprised.

"You are nervous," she said, gravely.

"What has happened?"

"Nothing, ma'am," said Taylor, motioning Myra to go, and striving to appear calm.

Elinor led the little girl out of the room, while the miserable mother buried her face in her pillows, weeping bitterly.

"Why did I not tell her the truth? Perhaps she would have pitied rather than blamed me. There is nothing for me to do now but go away."

CHAPTER XII.

FORTUNE—AND ITS CONDITIONS.

Thus her blind sister, fickle fortune, reigns, And undiscerning scatters crowns and chains.

—POPE.

"GUARDY! GUARDY!"

An impetuous rap, then the swift flinging open of the door by the man within, and the almost breathless girl was caught in his strong arms, and her excited cry stifled against his broad shoulder.

"Where in the name of Heaven have you been, child?" he asked, after a minute, holding her from him and regarding her great dilated eyes and hot color, while his own face lost something of its pallor. "I only found a few minutes ago that you had been away all night; and I think I have grown a year older since, Helene, you met with no harm?"

"You shall judge, Guardy, dear," she said, brightly, drawing him to his arm-chair, the one luxury his room contained. And kneeling with girlish grace before him, she narrated minutely her mishap of the previous afternoon and advent into the Trefethen mansion.

"And you are sure you were not badly hurt? That you are quite well enough to come away? I had the doctor's permission to come. But, Guardy, I am to go back!"

"Back? Back where, Helene?"

"To Mr. Trefethen! Don't look so puzzled, Guardy, and so grave, while I am so happy! You will not bid me reject this good fortune, surely?"

Her companion smiled, and drew his hand caressingly across the girl's flushed, beautiful cheeks.

"Dear child, I have no authority to interfere with your life in any way," he answered, gravely. "And I certainly would not for an instant counsel you against the acceptance of any real good. A thousand times, Helene, I have wished that it was in my power to make existence more bright and beautiful for you, and he looked down with tender eyes into the girl's fair face. "But you have not told me what you mean by your 'good fortune.'"

"Mr. Trefethen has offered to take me as his ward, and care for me as he would for his own daughter, for a year, as a birthday present! There! what do you think of that?"

Her companion regarded her in amazement; and, for a minute, in silence. He loved the girl so well that it hurt him to see her so happy, high spirits, and so full of life and vision; and yet he could not but conjecture that the acceptance of such a strange offer would result in more bitter misery to her than any she had yet known. He understood her ardent nature, her passionate longings for a home and life above her station, and he felt that for her to spend one year in idleness and luxury, only to be thrust back into sternest poverty and utter friendlessness, would be like thrusting her from Paradise into hell!

"Guardy, you are not glad?" she said, wistfully. "You are not glad! Tell me why?"

She leaned her pretty dimpled chin upon her hand and watched him, with heart that beat too sweetly for her to quite conceal her anxiety and excitement.

"Little girl, what will you do when that year is up? Could you come back here, contentedly?"

Her face brightened.

"Mr. Trefethen said I was not to worry about that, Guardy. And he wishes to see you, this evening, immediately after his dinner-hour. He said that by that time he should arrange plans concerning my future that he would confide in."

"And you are to live in his home?"

"Really, I don't know, he is so very odd. But I think not. I wished to be allowed some duties, but he only laughed and said I need not think he intended to prison so bright a bird in that cage."

"I have heard of this Mr. Trefethen—that he is enormously rich, and quite eccentric; so perhaps this is not a marvelous whim of his, though it does seem so to me," said the gentleman, speculatively. "Can you explain it, Helene?"

"Not fully; but I think he imagined that he looked like some one he knew," answered the girl, ingeniously. "He said I had her name, and that it was a wicked name, and I must change it. Sydney Trefethen he called me—and said it suited me well. Oh, he is very funny! So gallant—like a young man ought to be—one minute, and so quick and cross the next! But you will go and see him?"

"Certainly, Helene. At what hour?"

"Between seven and eight. And now I must run away—I have much to do—so much! Some one must collect my furniture to dispose of, and my things to pack—and all to-day, for Mr. Trefethen is to send for me in the morning."

"Then you are really going away from this poor little place where you have worked and been at home so long? Do you care at all, little girl?"

There was a touch of sadness in the speaker's voice that sent the tears in a hot gush to Helene's sunny blue eyes.

"Care? Of course I care—to leave you! How can I, when I have been here! It makes me sick to think how little I knew until you taught me. Oh, Guardy! Guardy! I shall love you just as much, and best of all, wherever I am, and all my life!" and she laid her wet face upon his kindly-clasping hands.

And yet, for all the girl's passionate outburst of grief she knew only when they were quite separated all that this man was to her.

"That is very kind of you to say," smiling tenderly; "but time brings many changes. I only pray that you will find a true friend, though all others fail you. I am glad that a bright future is opening to you, for the time has come when I, too, must desert this place where I have hoped and toiled."

"I have been fearing that ever since you commenced getting rich and famous."

"How delighted I should be, if those flattering words were true, Helene! But I do hope the foundations of competency and lasting success are laid."

"I know they are!" she said, gayly. "Why, Mr. Trefethen recognized your name the moment I mentioned it. I assure you it was quite an open sesame for me to his faith! And now, Guardy, mind! you must make him promise, tonight, to me, to repay him in some way, or what he proposes to do for me! Don't forget that!" looking back through the half-closed door with an earnest face.

And the man she left alone in his meagerly-furnished lodging, smilingly thought that the lonely old millionaire must be indeed very fond if he could not be repaid for all he might do for Helene's welfare by an occasional grateful glance from those brave, laughter-filled eyes. Then he wondered whether it was possible that Mr. Trefethen had discovered the girl's pretty face, and even yet held out the faintest prospect, and which gave her some legal or moral claim upon him. Could her good fortune be thus accounted for, or had the fickle goddess of the horn of plenty chosen the friendless orphan as a favorite upon whom to lavish, strangely bright gifts, in mere whimsicalness? And thus the man fell to reviewing his own life—his dreary, despondent, sorrowful life, with its score of wasted years, that had led him no success until now that he looked upon his maid's rapidly-advancing prime, and even yet held out the faintest prospect of promised happiness. Was he ever to conquer the malignity with which Clotho seemed determined to spin the thread of his life and win from her at last a golden girdle?

"Bah!" he said, disdainfully, rousing himself from his dreamings. "Is this the way to win the goal for which I strive and run! I have no minutes to waste, in idleness. Faster, faster, every day, speeds the time in which a fortune and a name must be gained!"

And he set himself resolutely at work, while the beautiful wail for whose sake he had been wont to daily rob himself of some of the precious hours he would otherwise have devoted to wrestling with his mad ambition, his Herculean purposes, had reached golden fortune just through the magic of her face.

But that night, for her sake, he sent in his card, Mr. Lucien Gillette, to Helene's new guardian, and was soon talking of her with Mr. Trefethen.

"She is pretty! Lovely! She pleases me!" said the old Frenchman, with a side glance at his interest in Helene. "But we will call her Sydney, now, if you please, Monsieur Gillette. She looks upon you as her guardian, I believe!"

"She has dubbed me that," replied the artist, smiling, "because she has studied with me, and had no other friend. I have no claim upon her, nor she upon me."

"It is as she says then—she is a charity child!"

"I think her history is entirely true. She is a remarkable girl. With all the work she does to earn a scanty living she has contrived to read and study much. I consider her intellectual powers considerably above the average."

"Yes, remarkably. Bravel sparkling! Coquette," assented the Frenchman, with a look up, his eyes twinkling. "This is what I mean to do for her—give her a year in which to get married!"

Lucien started.

"Surely, you will not tell her that!" he exclaimed, almost sternly. "That child!"

The Frenchman shrugged his shoulders.

"She's no child! One month in society will make her a woman—not to be outwitted by any belle. French girls marry young, and she can do nothing better, the pretty thing, alone in this great city."

"You don't mean, sir, that you propose to introduce that girl, who has never seen other life than in an asylum, a kitchen, and a garret, directly to the fashionable world? I never heard of such a thing."

The artist's surprised, dissenting face seemed only to please Mr. Trefethen.

"That is what I have been told before, to-day! But I shall do it! She shall take society by storm with her frank, sparkling ways! No artificial training shall spoil her!"

"And yet, you would spoil the purity of her soul, by setting her the degrading task of seeking a husband to stand between her and return to poverty?"

"Not so! Not so!" cried the old man, testily.

"The husband shall seek her! I shall tell her nothing, except that she is to be happy."

"And if the husband does not seek her? There are few demands for penniless brides."

"She shall not be penniless. I have given her my name, and the day she marries will settle a fine fortune upon her. But if, at the end of the year, she has no betrothed, and she wishes it, I will make her heiress to everything that I possess, except my estates abroad, and she shall never marry."

"You mean that a promise to that effect must be the condition upon which you will make her your heiress?"

"Yes! And I take her, now, upon these conditions—she not to know of them until I choose to tell them to her! What shall you say to her?"

"Nothing. My lips shall be sealed. I hope the girl will be happy. It is all I can do. I dare not take the responsibility of standing between her and the chances of this world."

"Then you have never intended marrying her yourself?" said the Frenchman, suddenly.

"I? Gillette's voice was fairly tremulous. It was such a new, strange, startling suggestion.

"Oh, no! No!"

"Well, well, she will be in good hands. There is no better woman in town to take her into society than Mrs. St. Martyn."

"Mrs. St. Martyn?"

"Ah! I see you know her! The old gentleman's keen eyes had not lost the indescribable look of mingled pleasure and repulsion with which his visitor had repeated that name.

"And do you know Gillette—young Gillette?" he added, instantly after, with voice hard and sharp and cutting as some slender deadly instrument.

"Slightly, yes, both of them."

"They say he will marry her. Do you think so?"

"I have no idea," returned the artist with well-bred indifference. "Have you anything more to say to me in regard to Mrs. Trefethen?"

"Only that I shall send her to Mrs. St. Martyn's, immediately. You will go there some time to see her?"

"That depends quite upon Mrs. St. Martyn."

"Not so, Monsieur. It depends upon Made-moiselle Trefethen; and she will never forget you."

"I should be sorry to think so. And, now,

for her sake, I must ask how she can repay you for your favor?"

"By being a success!" snapped Mr. Trefethen. "She must not disappoint me! She must be a success!"

So Mr. Gillette took his departure—marveling how strangely destiny was weaving the web of his life through the hands of this queer old man who had gathered up the threads and offered fortune upon such strange conditions to the founding; and questioning:

"Will she be a success?"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 483.)

Iron Wrist,

The Swordmaster of Copenhagen.

A TALE OF COURT AND CAMP.

BY COL. THOMAS HOYER MONSTERY, CHAMPION-AT-ARMS OF NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FIRST STAGE.

It was the same post-house at which the Dane had been overtaken the evening before that he now knocked, and he took care to make the summons loud enough.

The same stupid postmaster came to the door, but as soon as he saw the gleaming uniform of the swordmaster, he began to make obeisance.

"Mighty general, imperial highness, the horses are all ready. How many does your lordship require?"

"How many have you got?" demanded Olaf, for an idea had come into his head.

"Two complete sets, general—six horses."

"Out with them all—on the emperor's service," cried Olaf, and away went the postmaster as if he had been running a race.

Out came the horses, all ready harnessed for a trot or a gallop, and the postmaster looked round for the vehicle.

"Take the harness off, Nicolai, and change our saddles," commanded the Dane; and Nicolai, a stout, fat Cossack, trained to implicit obedience, followed the order in silence.

The postmaster staid in silence, but did not dare say a word, for Olaf stood close to him with a heavy whip in his hand.

No sooner were the saddles shifted than the swordmaster mounted his fresh horse and asked: "How many more horses, and where are they?"

"Only four, your excellency, and they are out in the fields."

Then drive these on, Nicolai. We shall want the coppers, and the lanterns were swinging away in the wildest fashion.

Olaf looked at it a moment and then far ahead. He saw another set of lanterns, up in the air, a few miles further on, and, like the others, these lights were swinging about.

Then it flashed on his mind in a moment that he was being signalled about.

He contrasted the treatment he had received at the post-house with what the emperor's orders led him to expect, and his acute mind at once jumped to the right conclusion.

"They will not overtake us in a hurry this time," he thought. "We have left the horses, and by the time we have swept a few post-houses, we shall be out of danger."

He knew that loose horses will follow a herd for miles after they have been unsaddled for lack of ability to carry a rider, and that by having reached golden fortune just through the magic of her face.

Therefore he did not attempt to husband the animal he was riding, but kept on at a good stiff gallop for mile after mile, the loose herd following him at the same pace.

Only the whiteness of the road enabled him to find his way, for the night was very dark and the fog was so thick that the trees of the forest were invisible till one almost touched them.

He rode on for nearly an hour at the same rapid gallop, till he began to feel that his new horse was laboring heavily.

Calling a halt, he rode into the herd, and the Cossack changed their saddles in a hurry, which they dashed on, nearly as before.

The new horses acted as if they were quite fresh. But Olaf knew that they would not last as long as if they had been really fresh, and he was glad to see, from the faint white glow that beamed from his eyes, that the moon was rising at last. It was two days beyond the full now, and he hoped that the fog would lift.

He did not want to miss the post-house. Flogging and spurring hard at the new horses, he kept them at a rapid gallop for half an hour longer, and then shifted saddles a second time.

As he did so, the fog began to lift above the tree-tops, and he saw that he was in the midst of a vast plain, flat as a billiard-table, and with nothing but a few scattered trees, hardly thick enough to be called a forest, through which the road ran on straight as an arrow.

Far ahead of him a light was gleaming.

"Nicolai! post-house," observed Nicolai, the Cossack, with a nod in the direction of the light.

"That is great and the czar is far off."

"Sixty-five versts," (about forty-six miles), was the reply.

"Only that!" exclaimed Olaf, incredulously; "and from the city?"

"No, from the czar's colonel."

"That is better. You say it is sixty-five versts to that post-house. Come, it is time we were there. Peshol, Nicolai!" (Come on, Nicholas).

Then they were away again, galloping as hard as ever on the last pair of horses, which Olaf calculated would about bring them to the post-house.

As they went along in their mad career, the Dane noticed a little stone tower, away off to the right of the road, on a tiny swell in the plain. The tower was distinguished by a number of lanterns on the top, arranged on a framework, and these lights were moving about through the night in a very peculiar manner.

"What is that, Nicolai?"

"That is the Cossack. 'Who knows! sendsome of his men there. They had no such black deeds in the old czar's time. They have one between every post-house, and sometimes two, all the way to Warsaw.'"

"Colonel, I do not know. They say the czar talks through them, all the way to Warsaw, in a minute or less. But you wouldn't get a true Cossack to believe that, you know."

Olaf watched the queer-looking lines of lanterns waving about wildly in the air, and wondered to himself what it could mean. In those days even the semaphore telegraph was a new thing, and not much used, outside of France.

However, he rode on without thinking much about it, and very soon drew up at the door of the Nicoloff post-house with his six horses pretty well exhausted by their forty-mile gallop in two hours and a half, reeking with sweat and ready to drop.

"They won't be able to follow us very far on this road," observed the swordmaster with a grin, and then he swung himself out of the saddle, and rapped loudly at the door with the butt of his whip, but without effect for several minutes.

He knew that some one was in the house, for he had seen the light, but the person was evidently a sound sleeper.

Nicolai, the Cossack, jumped off his horse and came to his officer's assistance, shouting at the top of his voice and battering at the door with his fist alternately.

At last Olaf, full of anger at the delay, uttered a savage imprecation in Danish, and fired one of his pistols up at the window where the light still shone so serenely. He smashed the glass.

Almost immediately they heard the sound of a grumbling, half-plaintive voice, and the shuffle of bare feet coming down-stairs.

It seemed that they were doomed to a repetition of former delays. But Olaf had not been in the czar's service six hours without learning a few things, and he soon showed his knowledge.

"Who's there, this time of night?" asked a surly voice, inside. "Go away, in God's name, honest people."

Olaf had fired a second pistol through the door, and now he shouted, savagely:

"Open, in the czar's name, fool of a postmaster, or I'll burn your house over your head."

The bullet made a hole through the door, and they heard a startled cry from within, but the postmaster did not give way yet. They heard him shuffle up-stairs, howling all the way as if he was in pain, and Olaf realized that the Russian depended on the thickness of his door to defend him from a forcible entry.

"Come, we must give our friend a lesson," he said, to Nicolai.

The Cossack grinned, for he liked nothing better, and the two prowled round the house, till they came to the railed inclosure in the rear, used for stable horses.

"Here are the horses, excellency," observed the Cossack.

True enough, there were about a dozen horses, lean, scraggy brutes, in the corral.

"Why not take them and go, colonel?"

"You'll not do that, but first I must chastise this impudent fellow. He must learn he cannot insult a Danish gentleman without paying for it. Take out a rail."

Nothing loth, the Cossack obeyed, and they went round to the front door, when a few vigorous prods sent the door flying from its fastenings, and revealed the station-master in his shirt at the head of the stairs, trembling with fear.

Olaf of Copenhagen dropped the rail, seized the station-master by the collar, and began to threaten the unfortunate Russian, who made no resistance when he saw the rich uniform of his assailant, but merely howled in a dismal manner.

"There, you rascal," cried the Dane, putting all his strength into a final cut. "You'll try to saddle the emperor's son, and you'll be hanged, will you? Tell me quick, how many horses have you?"

"None, excellency, none," cried the Russian, in a tone of pitiful entreaty. "Indeed, I have not a horse fit for you."

"They are all gone in the stable?"

"They are for all, general, sick, blind. Not one is fit to go out. All are at pasture."

"Well, I'll try them, anyway," and the swordmaster was as good as his word; for he rode off at a gallop, a few minutes later, driving all of the new lot of horses before him and leaving behind him only the exhausted horses from Paskoff.

As he galloped away, he noticed, not fifty yards from the post-house, another of those old-fashioned lanterns, and the lanterns were swinging away in the wildest fashion.

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He knew that loose horses will follow a herd for miles after they have been unsaddled for lack of ability to carry a rider, and that by having reached golden fortune just through the magic of her face.

Therefore he did not attempt to husband the animal he was riding, but kept on at a good stiff gallop for mile after mile, the loose herd following him at the same pace.

Only the whiteness of the road enabled him to find his way, for the night was very dark and the fog was so thick that the trees of the forest were invisible till one almost touched them.

He rode on for nearly an hour at the same rapid gallop, till he began to feel that his new horse was laboring heavily.

Calling a halt, he rode into the herd, and the Cossack changed their saddles in a hurry, which they dashed on, nearly as before.

The new horses acted as if they were quite fresh. But Olaf knew that they would not last as long as if they had been really fresh, and he was glad to see, from the faint white glow that beamed from his eyes, that the moon was rising at last. It was two days beyond the full now, and he hoped that the fog would lift.

He did not want to miss the post-house. Flogging and spurring hard at the new horses, he kept them at a rapid gallop for half an hour longer, and then shifted saddles a second time.

As he did so, the fog began to lift above the tree-tops, and he saw that he was in the midst of a vast plain, flat as a billiard-table, and with nothing but a few scattered trees, hardly thick enough to be called a forest, through which the road ran on straight as an arrow.

Far ahead of him a light was gleaming.

"Nicolai! post-house," observed Nicolai, the Cossack, with a nod in the direction of the light.

"That is great and the czar is far off."

"Sixty-five versts," (about forty-six miles), was the reply.

"Only that!" exclaimed Olaf, incredulously; "and from the city?"

"No, from the czar's colonel."

"That is better. You say it is sixty-five versts to that post-house. Come, it is time we were there. Peshol, Nicolai!" (Come on, Nicholas).

Then they were away again, galloping as hard as ever on the last pair of horses, which Olaf calculated would about bring them to the post-house.

As they went along in their mad career, the Dane noticed a little stone tower, away off to the right of the road, on a tiny swell in the plain. The tower was distinguished by a number of lanterns on the top, arranged on a framework, and these lights were moving about through the night in a very peculiar manner.

"What is that, Nicolai?"

"That is the Cossack. 'Who knows! sendsome of his men there. They had no such black deeds in the old czar's time. They have one between every post-house, and sometimes two, all the way to Warsaw.'"

"Colonel, I do not know. They say the czar talks through them, all the way to Warsaw, in a minute or less. But you wouldn't

to reach their own homes. A touch on the shoulder brought him about to face the master of the line.

"I hope you are fresh yet, Shields. Here are a couple of flats I want you to take on to Chestertown to-night. They are ready here on the side track."

Not quite ready it would appear, for two or three heavy kegs were trundled past them where they stood, and loaded on under the road-master's supervision. The engineer received his instructions, and proceeded to hook on the caboose and engine. Dana sprung up and waved his lantern from the doorway of the former, and it was not until the train was under headway that he discovered two of the laborers still in the compartment.

"What are you doing here?" he demanded, with sudden foreboding as he recognized them. "Hold easy, Shields. Keep a civil tongue if you know what's good for yourself. You're no better man than we are, and we don't propose to see you a-rolling in luck and us at the foot of the heap. We're going to make a stroke for ourselves, and you've got to help us whether you like it or not. What's in them kegs you've got aboard?"

"Spikes, I daresay, but I don't know." "Well, I do. It's specie for the month's pay along the line, and the vice-president is on the look-out for it at Chestertown, but it'll never get there. You'll drop us and it a dozen miles this side."

"Will I, though?"

The two dark, sinister faces turned upon him were answer enough, without the appearance of a revolver simultaneously in the hands of each. "We won't stand no fooling, Jake and me. You're in the scrape, and may as well make the best of it. We depend on you to manage the engine, and give us time for a start before you get into Chestertown, and we'll never get there. If we're took, your friends and the company shall know it's a State's prison bird they've been making so much of."

Dana flinched. "You ruin me with the company in any case," he said.

"Then come in with us," urged the man.

"We never go back on a pal. What's that for?"

suspiciously, as Dana leaned out to signal with his light.

"He made no answer, but turned in a moment,

the signs of a struggle in his working face.

"I'm with you, and you give me no choice,"

he announced, and the caboose to make his way to the engine. A jerking motion of the

train showed him that the speed had been in-

creased, and it was not until the train had

sprung across the couplings to the tender,

"Better that I should go under the wheels than

aid in their purpose," he muttered, between his

set teeth, and in another moment he had cut off

the train.

"You signaled more speed," said the engineer,

as he entered the cab. "What for? We were

faster than regulation time, as it was."

"The couplings have parted," Dana explained.

"Keep ahead."

It was a necessary caution. A steep down-

grade of four miles lay ahead of them, and at

the end of it was the river, spanned by a trestle

work sixty rods long.

The glaring headlights of the engine flashed

over the surrounding landscape, the pursuing

train rushed with increasing force, and the

caboose, having no weight to hold it down,

began to jump the rails and bounce back upon

them with terrific jars.

"If them fellows don't put on the brakes,

they'll go into the river as sure as fate," said the

engineer, and not being railroad men the catastrophe

overtook them.

The engine slowed as it neared the bridge and

passed over in safety, but the caboose leaped

clear off the rails and turned completely over

before it struck the water and sank beneath it,

while the loaded flat-cars following, kept the

track and came to a stand on the other side.

An inquest was held upon the bodies of the

two drowned wrecks, but the affair was ad-

judged an accident, and no blame attaching to

any one, and Dana Shields alone knew of the

loss which had threatened the company, or of

the dangerous expedient by which he had saved

it and himself.

Captain Dick Talbot, KING OF THE ROAD;

OR,
The Black-hoods of Shasta.

A wild story of life in the Cinnabar Valley; of the men who tell the men who rob and the men who kill; of the battles of the mountain men, the places of the wild Western land, strange as the men who people the hills and valleys over which great Shasta rules.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

AUTHOR OF "OVERLAND KIT," "ROCKY MOUNTAIN ROB," "KENTUCKY, THE SPORT," ETC.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE MEN WHO WERE NOT EXPECTED. THE ambush had been chosen with excellent judgment. The trail at this point traversed a small prairie, dotted here and there with clumps of timber, around and among which the road ran, and although, in addition to the driver, who, as we have stated, was fairly bristling with weapons, the best deputy the sheriff boasted sat on the box with a breech-loading rifle laid across his lap, his fingers on the trigger.

All due precaution seemed to be taken against a surprise, but the mountain man did, even as well versed in the customs of the mountain region as the sheriff's deputy, when from an innocent-looking clump of timber a horseman rode, and, not ten paces from the trail, "covered" the official with a cocked rifle, and at the same moment the mountain man appeared on the right, one directly ahead and two in the rear.

Against such a force it was madness to offer resistance, and the sheriff fairly groaned when he realized that he was encircled.

He sunk back in his seat and cursed his ill-luck. The prisoner laughed as he watched the expression upon the face of the burly official.

"Well, sheriff, I reckon that I won't ride to Yreka with you," he said, quietly.

"Durn the law!" the sheriff cried. "Again you've played best trumps."

"A chance for you to carry out the Governor's order now," the sheriff suggested.

"I reckon that my life is worth as much to me as anybody else's, and I ain't anxious to cash my checks yet. The trick is, you know, pardner, and I pass." And with the word he unfurled the lariats which bound him to the prisoner. "Oh, no! I was to go for you I reckon that your gang would go for me, and so, no sugar in mine, thank you."

"A sensible conclusion!" the sheriff exclaimed. "Well, take care of yourself," and the prisoner moved to rise, but a sudden thought checked him. "By the by, just have the kindness to unlock these playthings, will you?" he held up his wrists encircled by the steel bracelets as he spoke.

"Of course; anything to oblige," replied the sheriff, with a grimace, and at once he produced the key and unlocked the handcuffs.

"And now my weapons please. I'm sorry that I can't stay longer, but I cannot be always with you, you know."

With another wry face the sheriff presented Cherokee with the elegant tools which had so often stood him in good stead.

"Take care of yourself. See you again some time; and, sheriff, I won't be hard on you for your share in this night's work, for you have only done your duty, but for the others, well, when you get back to Cinnabar, just give my compliments to both the postmaster and the Governor, and tell them that I owe

them one, and that they may rest easy that I shall settle the obligation, for no man in the Shasta area knew Cherokee to crawl out of paying his debts, whether the fairness was due in either coin or blood."

The quiet, determined tone fairly made the burly sheriff shiver, and mentally he thanked his lucky stars that he did not stand in the shoes of either Brockford or the Governor.

"So long!" ejaculated Cherokee, thrusting his weapons into their pockets, opening the door of the coach, and jumping out onto the moon-lit ground.

"Drive on!" cried a hoarse voice, the leader of the masked men speaking; and the command was at once obeyed.

On went the coach at its best speed, the driver applying the lash to the restive animals, and Cherokee, alarmed by the strange voice, glaring around him, with hand on weapons, discovered that he was in the hands of the Black-hoods!

No pals of Injun Dick had come to his rescue, but, on the contrary, the band of strangely-disguised men who had made a powerful name for themselves by wild and lawless deeds amid the hills of Shasta.

The coach went on a hundred yards or more, and then making a circle to the right, wheeled around and took the back trail toward Cinnabar. For once in his life, at any rate, if never before, the bold Cherokee had been taken entirely by surprise. He had been sure that the coach had been stopped that it was through the kindly devices of ardent friends, but when he looked around him and saw that he was surrounded by the road-agent gang, the Black-hoods of Shasta, he began to ask himself if he hadn't jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire.

The coach had disappeared in the distance, and the road-agents, still with leveled weapons in their hands, began to close in upon him.

If the strangers were friends they came in a very unfriendly fashion, and Cherokee, always a firm believer in the idea that the best way to meet danger was with a bold front, pulled out his revolver and prepared to stand upon the defensive.

The highwaymen at once perceived the defiance, and their leader called out:

"You fool! do you think that you can fight us?"

"I reckon that I can try," Cherokee replied, decisively.

"We are five to one! If you are wise, you will throw down your weapons and surrender."

"Not by a jugful," was the answer.

"I don't know what you want with me, but I'm going to find out before I allow you to come any nearer. You're all within range now, and I give you fair warning that I shall plug some of you if you advance."

"We are friends."

"Prove it by putting up your weapons."

"Haven't we proved it by rescuing you from the sheriff?"

Cherokee picked up his ears at this question. How did they know who was in the coach?

"Why did you interfere in this matter? What is your little game?" he demanded.

"Well, we want just such a man as you."

"Oh, you do?"

"Yes; and since you have fallen out with the law, why, you had better fall in with us."

Cherokee had had an idea, when he first heard the voice of the speaker, that the man was no stranger to him, and now he was sure of it.

"Not by a jugful," was the answer.

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MARRIED TOO YOUNG.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

My wife she was a beautiful thing,
And it need not be told
That when I wed I wed for love—
She married me for gold.
I'd past the vanities of youth
And settled down serene,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

I only had been wed three times
The happiest marriage did I think
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.
Our ages seemed so suitable,
And at a happy mean,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

My head might lack a hair or two
Perhaps, of being bald,
A tooth or two, I'm sure, saved me
From being toothless called.
My head was surely well with age,
My love was saccharine,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

It was a fashionable match,
As everybody said,
She need not think that other girls
Would turn her husband's head;
And this assuring fact I know
By her was plainly seen,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

That she would never grow old to me
She ought have surely known,
Also because I'm somewhat lame
From her I'd never have down.
Her people all were proud of me,
And well they should have been,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

But ah, my wife was young and vain
While I was old and wise—
More than a father to her
In all the name implies.
"Grandfather, then, you are," said she,
With proud and haughty mien—
Though I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

She got to calling me "old man,"
Which I thought very rude;
To wear a cap and dress in gray,
Indeed, she never would.
She wanted to be vain and gay,
And dress like a May-queen,
Though I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

She had a very foolish head,
And I could plainly see,
Though somewhat blind, that she did not
Her old make of me.
She ran off with another man!
Was ever such shame seen?
And he is only about three!
And she is seventeen.

I know my heart would break to-day
Were it not old and tough;
Why she a young man should prefer
To me is strange enough.
The fault is she was far too young
To suit me; so I mean
To wed again at nineteen-five
A wife of, say—nineteen!

The Condor-Killers;

WILD ADVENTURES AT THE EQUATOR.

BY T. C. HARBAUGH,
AUTHOR OF "SNOW-SHOE TOM," ETC.

VI.

THE STRANGE TRAP IS SPRUNG—JACK'S FIRST
CONDOR.

HAVING divested the cow's carcass of the skin, Elgado cut out some great hunks of flesh which he covered with his cloak and then, assisted by the boy Nicholas, who was still a loss to conjecture how he was going to catch a condor, he rolled the body to a cliff near at hand and dropped it into a valley far below. This valley was covered with a growth of prickly bushes into whose depths the condor would not venture after the faintest morsel, and the Peruvian boy, smiling at the wonderment depicted upon the faces of his companions, returned to the hide.

As he did so, he looked up and with a cry of "condor!" he pointed to a large open place. To strain their eyes as they would, they could see nothing but the serenest of skies. Not a cloud was in sight, much less the dark pinions of the vulture king of the Cordilleras.

Getting to his singular task again, Elgado carried the hide into a large open place. To the fleshy side he fastened the pieces of meat with cords made from the sinews of the llama and huacuco, and having concealed Nicholas and Jack at a spot from which they could see the trap and not be seen in return, by the peering eyes of the condor, the ingenious boy went back to the device, and with a smile of self-satisfaction, crept under the skin!

"Catching a condor with a cow-skin will prove as successful as catching a fly old bird with chaff," said the incredulous Jack, in low tones to his companion.

"I am not willing to confirm your judgment, Jack," was the reply.

"You'll confirm it presently and help me laugh at Elgado's wit and scheme. A fellow would stick to a tree and grapple with a jaguar single-handed would be the very chap to attempt to catch a gigantic bird, and one of the shrewdest of the feathered family, with such a ludicrous device as he has fixed up."

Nicholas, the student, did not reply. He had more confidence in Elgado's condor-trap, though he could not see how the boy would secure his prize.

In seeking food the condor depends almost entirely upon his keenness of vision. From his station in mid-air, even beyond the almost of the Cordillera hunter, he notes a carcass and at once descends. His sense of smell is very poor; a piece of raw meat wrapped in a paper and placed before him will not attract his attention.

Our impatient friends did not have to wait long for the appearance of the great bird of prey. A finger laid on Jack's arm told him that the quick eye of Nicholas had detected the condor, and a glance upward showed him the great bird descending slowly. Nearer and nearer, in concentric circles, came the condor, and at last his talons sunk into the flesh that crowned the hide. Then he fell at once to gorging himself, tearing the meat and devouring it with disgusting rapidity until Jack expressed his wonderment at Elgado's inactivity.

"Ha! ha!" laughed the boy. "My little Peruvian is caught in his own trap. He is afraid of the bird he has called from the skies. The condor has caught the boy, not the boy the condor. There is the best shot I shall ever get at the air-king!" and the speaker seized his rifle; but the hand of his companion was laid upon it.

"No, Jack. We must not offend Elgado. You forget that we owe him our lives. Think of the jaguar last night. My word for it that he is not lying inactive beneath the skin, for a minute since I saw a hand rise from beneath it, and it held a rope."

"A rope? I did not see it. What can the boy be doing?"

"We must wait. What! another condor? That is one more than the boy has bargained for."

Sure enough a second condor pounced upon the meat, and speedily fell to devouring it. The train did not fight for the spots, but side by side to the flesh which already beneath the warm rays of the sun was becoming putrid. To our young adventurers the sight before them was exciting, and it was with difficulty, notwithstanding his late words, that Nicholas could prevent his young friend from firing at the birds.

But a new scene was about to burst upon their vision. The trap was about to be sprung; and all at once Elgado shot from beneath the skin with a

loud cry, and turning toward our friends called them forth.

The eager boys did not waste time in obeying the summons, and as they leaped from the retreat, the condors attempted to escape.

But in vain! Jack now saw that Elgado had not remained idle during his sojourn under the skin, nor had he wished to leave it before he did.

The birds, uttering their peculiar cries, not unlike the hissing voice of the goose, continued to attempt flight; but a number of strong cords had been tied about their legs while they were gorging themselves. These cords were also fastened to the heavy and unwieldy hide, which they could not, tied as they were, carry aloft.

For many moments the trio enjoyed, to a certain degree, the struggles of the gigantic birds. "Cow-skin catch condor after all, eh?" cried Elgado, turning a look of triumph upon Jack.

"In this way," Cordillera herdsman catches many hundreds in a year. Sometimes, when he wants to kill many at once, he kills a mule and puts the carcass on the edge of a pit, so balanced that it will easily fall over. Pretty soon the sky is black with the great birds, and down they pounce upon it. Then by fighting over the meat, they draw it over the edge and it falls down into the pit. Not willing to lose it they follow it down and gorge themselves so that they cannot rise. Then come the people, and with stones and clubs they put the birds to death. So, señors, you see we have many traps for the condor. This is but one of them. Now I will show you."

So saying, Elgado drew forth his bolas—that indispensable companion of the Indian of Peru—and took the lighter ball in his hand. Then for a moment he swung the other two in a wide circle over his head, and suddenly sent the strange weapon forward. A moment later the aim told, for the weapon encompassed the neck of one of the condors, and as it fell, it caught the great wings grew still, and the bird dropped upon the hide.

"Now, my boy," said Elgado, turning to Jack, "you shall slay your first condor." But Jack would not shoot a captive. Can't you unloose him?"

The Peruvian boy smiled. "We'll see, little señor," he said, and drawing his knife, he stepped toward the remaining bird.

When at a distance of twenty feet from him, Elgado halted, and seizing the glittering blade at the point drew his right arm back.

"Ready?" he said, glancing over his shoulder. Jack cocked his rifle and fixed his sparkling eyes on the monster of the mountains.

Elgado stood for a moment with the knife drawn back, and then sent it whizzing forward. A loud shout of applause from Nicholas attested the success of the throw. The North American Indian could not have thrown his tomahawk with greater precision. If the vol had cut the cord that prevented the condor's flight, and as it was the last bird to the feast, and consequently not so gored as its companion, it rose at once into the air.

Up, up went the condor! Jack, though covering it, did not fire. "Quick!" cried Nicholas, sharing the excitement of the moment.

"Quick, señor, or el condor will escape." But the young hunter did not touch the trigger until the noble bird had been given a fair chance for life. Then a loud report burst upon the ears of all, and the vulture-king fell over and began to descend.

"Hurrah!" shouted Nicholas, carried away with enthusiasm. A shot good enough to invoke a Berdian's envy.

"I hit him in the head; wait and see!" replied Jack, in calm triumph.

A moment later the condor reached the ground, and Elgado and Nicholas were surprised to see the boy's feet being given a fair chance for life. Then a loud report burst upon the ears of all, and the vulture-king fell over and began to descend.

Not a little pleased with their adventure, the trio left the spot and continued their journey toward Albo's hut. Jack carried away several wing feathers of the bird as souvenirs of his first condor.

By Elgado's guidance the hut was reached at the close of day; but not a living object greeted them. The absence of the pet puma was remarked by the Peruvian boy; but a surprise greater than that awaited them in the doorway.

Upon entering the hut, they found everything that belonged to Jack and Nicholas standing in the center of the room.

"Some one has been here!" cried Nicholas. "Albo's!" said Elgado. "See! he has taken only his own property. If the vol had cut the cord that prevented the condor's flight, and as it was the last bird to the feast, and consequently not so gored as its companion, it rose at once into the air."

For a minute the three gazed into each other's faces.

"What is to be done now, señors?" asked Elgado. "I know the paths that lead to Lima," and the Peruvian boy executed a courteous bow.

"To Lima!" echoed Jack. "Who wants to go back now! Do you know the Amazonian valley?"

Elgado smiled proudly, and said as he executed a second salutation: "As well as I know the passes of the Cordilleras."

"Then lead us to it!" was the reply. "We'll postpone our grand llama-hunt. Elgado, we club you el condor! Just come this way. Don't make any noise." And when he had silently tiptoed around the sward to the rear of the house she said: "Look! Look there!"

At the edge of the vine-clad arbor, half-glimmered in the twilight, a form was crouching and digging. It was Mr. Montello in stocking-feet and dressing-gown.

"He did the same last night, Miss Delly," declared the maid, in a hushed voice. "and when Mr. Harman saw him, he was so angry that he came around to the front and go all over the porch as if hunting for something. Whatever does it mean—do you know? I am real scared about him."

The two were mystified. I was not. If not a born detective, I at least possessed a reasonable stock of perception. The ghostly figure soon reentered the house. I strode forward, followed by the others, and in a few seconds we had unearthed—two packages of bonds, \$5,000 in each, contained in a stout tin, keyless box.

"Ah!" exclaimed Delora, "I see how it is. Father is a somnambulist—though, very strangely, I never knew it—and has been robbing himself."

"Do not speak of this in any way. Let the money remain there. I am distressed. Oblige me, for I have a great object."

They promised. As I hurried homeward, I muttered: "Somnambulist, indeed! I recall, now, his words to Delora: 'Wait until we know something more about this Elgyd Harman.' The man old sinner! I did not think him vile as that. Well, we shall see, Mr. Montello."

A third note came to the office next A. M., announcing an additional loss of \$5,000 in bonds drawn from deposit and handed for market. A second note, aggregating \$2,000, was now offered, and again was suspicion thrown on me as being present that night.

"Well, I was present!" I exclaimed, and proceeded to relate all I had seen, naming my witnesses.

My superiors were now quick to coincide with my conclusions: that Guy Montello was striving to cast odium upon me as an excuse to break off my engagement with his daughter. Their reply to his note was simply:

"We have found the culprit, to a certainty!"

The chief and I visited Montello Cottage during the afternoon, and for the first time I displayed my badge of office.

"You have been 'barking up the wrong tree,' Mr. Montello," said my chief. "The very party whom you suspected has hunted down the true thief. A word in your private library, please."

It was a singular interview, and developed

wearing a badge of authority, and in my ears rung the serious injunction:

"Now, see if you can prove yourself valuable."

It had never struck me that I was cut out for the rôle of a detective; but I was in the business, and no mistake, waiting for an opportunity to display my talent, if I had any.

This evening I had entered the parlor of Guy Montello, the broker, unannounced—a habit not unusual after my betrothal with Delora—and the first thing I heard, issuing distinctly from the adjoining room, was the bit of conversation quoted.

Presently Delora came in. She greeted me with the accustomed smile and kiss. But I could observe that she was ill at ease. She must have known that I overheard her father's speech, but no allusion was made to it. At ten o'clock I took my departure.

Crossing the porch, my eye caught something which slid and scraped ahead of me. A pocket-book!—full, too! Belonging to Mr. Montello, perhaps. I half-turned to inquire as to its ownership; but the shutters were already closed, and it would be useless to disturb the inmates of the house by sounding the door-bell at that late hour. Next time I called would answer.

Imagine my astonishment when, the following morning, the head of our department placed in my hands the following epistle:

"MESSRS. BLANKS—Detectives.
GENTLEMEN:
I have to announce to you the loss, on last night, of a pocket-book containing \$1,000. It was lying on my desk in a room rear of the parlor. No one has visited the house or been seen near the premises except a young man of the city, by name, Elgyd Harman. While I have reason to suspect, I have not sufficient ground for accusation. The matter is placed in your hands. If you desire further particulars, call at my office, No. —, Exchange Place.
Respectfully,
GUY MONTELLO."

"What does it mean?" asked the chief. "Mean?"—"I was crimson to the temples. 'Why, here is the pocket-book. I found it on the porch when leaving, late last night, and intended to return it to-night.'"

"Were you with Mr. Montello in his private room?" "No."

"Whom did you see there?" "Again I flushed; but replied: 'It is necessary for me to state that Miss Montello and myself are betrothed. My visits there are purely accidental.'"

"Oh! And were you with her every minute of your stay?" "Yes, every minute, as I am sure she will inform you if required."

At this juncture a messenger appeared, bearing a note. It was another note from Mr. Montello, dated at his residence, York Road, and ran as follows:

"GENTLEMEN:
Since my last communication to you, I have suffered another loss. \$3,000 in U. S. bonds are missing from the same desk from which the pocket-book was stolen. I had placed them there in view of a negotiation for to-day. If we can find the party who stole the bonds, we will, without doubt, strike the trail of the bonds. \$1,000 reward."

Our chief gave vent to a whistle. This looked like rushing things. He gazed keenly at me, tapping his finger on the table with the pocket-book which I had proudly handed to him.

"Has Mr. Montello approved your wooing of his daughter?" he inquired, at length. "Quite the contrary. But she is of age, and—"

"Is he aware that you are connected with the force?" "I have not mentioned the fact to any one."

There was a brief consultation between my superiors, and we were then dismissed.

Harman in the mere case of the pocket-book, it might be returned with explanations. The bond business, however, gives the affair some intricacy. While satisfied of your innocence, still must work the case up.

"Up, up went the condor! Jack, though covering it, did not fire. 'Quick!' cried Nicholas, sharing the excitement of the moment."

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that the father of my betrothed was guiltless of any real intent to injure me. The case was one of those which frequently occur: such an intense occupation of the mind by one subject while awake that it still held the brain when asleep.

The remarkable part, however, consists in that, while no definite plan for getting rid of me had been devised during waking moments, the plot was conceived in absolute slumber. He confessed to having dreamed something of the kind, but invariably forgot it on awakening. The discovery of the bonds was an honest surprise to him.

Well, Mr. Montello," said the chief, in conclusion. "Mr. Harman has earned the \$2,000 reward. You had better pay it over to him and—let it go toward defraying expenses of the wedding trip. We'll keep the episode out of the papers, so far as real names are concerned."

And so it was arranged. My first exploit as a detective was to secure myself a good wife. I have performed much more difficult tasks during several years now spent in the service.

SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

NOTE.—Owing to the pressure of matter on our columns this week several questions are held over to answer in our next.

Camping Out.

I.

ONE of our young friends asks us for a set of papers on "Camping Out," on the plea that vacation is near, and that he and his friends want to know a little about how to do it, where to go and what to carry.

We are the more willing to help our young friends with our advice, because the pleasantest memories of our life are connected with the camp-fire, and because the greater part of our education was passed in open air, or under canvas.

Many a time since that have we been tempted to leave the hot, dusty city in June and July, and to join the noble army of tramps, who camp out all the time, and we have always advised every young friend who has asked us for advice where to spend his vacation, to "go to the woods and camp out."

We are also glad to say that whenever our advice has been taken, the youngsters who have gone out, have always come back to thank us for giving them a good time. There is, in fact, a party of boys who go out to the wild woods with the determination to rough it by camping out, so long as the weather is fine.

We should not advise any party to start on such a tour in November. A winter camp has its charms, but they are only accessible to old hands, who know the secrets of camping and how to make themselves comfortable. We remember well being one of such a party, years ago, in a wild West Virginia valley, all recently wounded men, discharged from hospital, and turned out of the cars into a desolate place, with six inches of half-melted snow on the ground, just about sunset.

"There, men," said the quartermaster, looking out at the comfort of our campsite. "This is your ground. Go into camp and make yourselves comfortable."

Comfortable! It looked like a hopeless task. There was the valley white with snow, a few black stumps peeping through, on each side the hills towering up, and at the top of the hills a scanty fringe of scrubby oaks and beeches. Nevertheless, it is an actual fact that, in less than an hour after, our party was ensconced in a row of little white shelter tents, the ground dry beneath us, and, in front of each, a blazing fire, on which simmered our little coffee-pots, while a big frying-pan sputtered merrily under the hissing pork. We were actually "comfortable" and slept "like tops" that night.

And what was the mystery of our comfort? Very simple. Each man had a piece of shelter tent, a haversack with some pork and hard-tack, and a little india-rubber bag of coffee and sugar, while one of the party had borrowed an ax. That, with a blanket apiece and an india-rubber poncho, was all our provision for comfort, and with it we soon procured all the rest.

The coming on of a sharp frost which hardened the ground under the snow, made our labors easier; but even in mud we have seen good comfortable camps made, where wood is plenty, and parties of boys wishing to camp out, we have a few words of advice better than all else: take as few things with you as you can. The essentials are a knife and hatchet to each member of the party, a woolen blanket and a rubber bag of coffee, sugar and salt pork. All the rest you can do without, if you are in the woods, where game is plenty and fish abundant. Even bread is not so essential as you would think; and if you cannot get on without it, take it in the form of flour to make cakes. One frying-pan to the party, a quart cup and a pint cup, both of tin, to each, and at least one box of matches in a water-tight tin case to every person in the crowd, and you are set up for cooking.

Fishing-rods are of course valuable where fish are plenty, but lines and hooks are the only real necessities, as rods can be cut wherever hazel grows. Guns are also valuable, but—for boys—dangerous, while bows and arrows, in expert hands, will kill game as well as guns, without frightening all the other game in the neighborhood.

The fact is, as Maurice Thompson frequently observes, that a careful cultivation of the use of the long bow leads to innumerable pleasures, and we have known a party of boys furnished with bows to keep themselves in food in a wooded country for a ten-days' trip with great results in the way of pleasure.

There are all sorts of birds and animals in the great woods of Orange, Delaware, Ulster, Greene and dozens of other counties that could be named in New York State alone, that are plentiful and good to eat. All Pennsylvania and every Midland State is full of such squirrels, opossums, raccoons, chipmunks, hares, jays, robins, none very shy and only needing patience and a sure aim to bring them down.

To acquire the art of shooting game with the bow and arrow is by no means a matter of great difficulty to a healthy boy with good eyesight. As Maurice Thompson suggests, targets are of little use to shoot at as practice for game practice. A rubber ball suspended from a string under a tree in front of a high bank of soft earth is the proper target for the would-be archer.

Beginning at a distance of ten or twelve feet, and gradually increasing till the mark can be striven nine times out of ten at a hundred feet the progress made in a week's steady drill is amazing. The high bank catches the waste arrows and saves trouble in hunting for them; but when a boy can hit a common rubber ball at a hundred feet, stationary or slightly swinging, he is quite fit to begin at a hare, squirrel or jay.

The archer does not pretend to shoot his game flying. He has no need. His silent arrow does not scare all the animals in the neighborhood like the loud thunder of the double-barrel gun, and he can live for weeks in plenty, in a place where the gun-hunter would soon drive every feather and hair in the way of game out of the country.

As for fish, many a party of artists on sketching tours in the Adirondacks lives on little else for weeks, in places where the trout are so thick that one may catch twenty pounds in an hour. With these preliminary remarks let us next consider how one can do best in the hot months by camping out.

Let us start with a party of only four boys, who are all hard worked in city offices and who have a two weeks' vacation which they wish to spend in the woods. They are boys getting only \$5 a week and each has \$10 saved up, which, with his two weeks' vacation pay, gives him \$30—or a total of \$80 in the party. Prob-

lem: how to get the most enjoyment out of this sum in two weeks.

Perhaps the best answer is to show what four boys of our acquaintance once did in the same case, starting from New York city.

In the first place these youngsters determined to make a boat trip of it, and hired a large Whitehall working-boat with mast and sail for five dollars a week. This took ten dollars out of their eighty. There were two guns, (both single-barrels), a pistol and three fishing-rods in the party, with two sets of hooks and lines to each rod.

It may be objected that these boys got their boat too cheap, but from inquiries made at the Battery, New York city, we found that the price was rather high, \$4 a week being a common figure, and inasmuch as New York is an exceptionally dear place, we can assume \$5 as the outside price per week to be paid for a party of four in a boat. Of course they must be familiar with the water or no boatman would hire his craft to them, for fear of accidents.

To return to our boys. They had \$70 left with which they laid in provisions in the following extravagant style: Eight pounds of coffee, the same of sugar, a box of hard-tack, fifty pounds of salt pork, and some twenty or thirty cans of all sorts of minor delicacies.